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Twin Teachers: Advancing Understanding Among Secondary and Post-Secondary Composition Instructors Through Individual Connections

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Twin Teachers: Advancing Understanding among Secondary and Post-Secondary Composition Instructors through Individual Connections

A Capstone Project

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by Zachary Garrett

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MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

Doctor of Arts in English Pedagogy

Capstone Project Approval Form

Candidate Name: Zachary Garrett

Specialization: Teaching Writing (Rhetoric & Composition)

Project Title: Twin Teachers: Advancing Understanding Among Secondary and Post-Secondary Composition Instructors Through Individual Connections

Project Abstract: This project relates research-based efforts to develop a context-sensitive collaborative plan for instructors of English composition at the high school and college levels, providing a model for professional development and cross-border conversations among writing educators. Adapted from the "twin towns" or "sister cities" arrangements forged between municipalities in different countries with the purpose of strengthening relationships and promoting cultural understanding, this plan targets the cultural differences between high school and college instructors as a step toward incremental improvement implemented by educators themselves. The literature review establishes the cultural divide, describing the divide through discourse and practice, identifies effective practices for collaborative efforts in English composition, and explores the question of writing goals. The author then conducts primary mixed methods research into a specific context via student surveys, instructor surveys, and instructor interviews at two institutions in the Ohio River Valley region. The data from the literature review and gathered site data are used to develop a context-sensitive collaborative plan that would individually pair high school and college English instructors in a region through a sustained series of in-person and electronically mediated meetings, exchanging information on the differences in professional culture between the levels of schooling with the purpose of helping students through informed adaptation of teaching practices.

Candidate Signature: _____

Date Submitted: 26 April 2019

The Doctor of Arts in English Pedagogy committee has determined the above candidate has successfully completed the capstone project.

Sara Cooper, Capstone Instructor

Saihua Xia, DA Committee Member

Kevin Binfield, DA Program Director

Michael Morgan, DA Committee Member

Deborah Bell, DA Program Associate Director

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

BEFORE
"Gonna kick their asses in class...
gonna get good grades"
- Descendents, "Mass Nerder"

AFTER
"All I know is that I don't know,
All I know is that I don't know nothing"
- Operation Ivy, "Knowledge"

Acknowledgments

This journey reflects an ongoing fascination with the numinous wonder of communication and learning in all its forms. As the rhetorician Kenneth Burke noted in a piece of personal correspondence, "I still hold to the three miracles: that there is existence at all, that our kind worked out the sexes as it did, *and that we found our way with words*" (qtd. in Irmscher 112). While Burke and I may not have agreed on the origin of that miracle – I acknowledge God for the splendor of existence and the endowment of our faculties for making sense of it – it is telling that the expression of wonder in communication is described by theist and agnostic alike through the same term ("miracle") denoting a thing that is both improbable yet indisputably *there*. I am fortunate to have been given the opportunity to keep exploring this source of wonder, and I will keep doing so as long as circumstances allow.

However, there are other important people who have provided vital assistance. At Murray State University, I appreciate all of the devoted professors who continued to feed my interest in the possibilities of the word in all its forms. First, I thank Sara Cooper for advice, encouragement, and for creating an environment where I experienced almost none

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Garrett, who ought to receive an honorary doctorate for her help during my time in this program, who devoted her primary attentions to bringing up my sister and me over the past thirty-two years. Next, my grandma, Flo Austin Dunning, a local author who raised me thinking that writing was a perfectly normal thing to do, that a blizzard of paper provided a natural environment for humans, and who impressed upon me an attitude toward writing and reading that maintains an unaffected appreciation for what they have to give. This attitude has helped me avoid the snare that takes in many graduate students in English, critiqued by Thomas Merton in *The Seven Storey Mountain*, as becoming one who "secretly detest[s] all literature…while pretending to be a professor of it…burying and concealing it under a mass of irrelevancies" (154). Finally, to my fiancé, Erin Medvecz, who has been a valuable source of understanding and has provided an example of love, sacrifice, and support.

I dedicate this work to my son, Peter Garrett; I want to be the kind of dad that provides for you an illustration of commitment and passion, and I hope this work contributes to the building of a solid and healthy foundation for our family as we progress into the future.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Reducing barriers and improving outcomes for students entering first-year college composition is most effectively and efficiently done at the high school level; colleges can play catch-up, but it is not the best use of institutional resources or student time. There is a cultural barrier (that is, a barrier of practices, emphases, customs, social perception, external pressures, and discourse) between high school and college faculty, however, that often keeps writing educators from possessing an intuitive sense of the learning conditions that their students have experienced or for the writing tasks which they are either preparing their students. There are other several factors keeping high school teachers from preparing their students more effectively, many of which are not under their control: insufficient time to give feedback on extended writing projects, required content coverage, and resources devoted to standardized test preparation. Other factors can be addressed by teachers; for instance, educators can take steps to reduce high school/college cultural barriers among themselves, facilitating the transfer of pedagogical methods and values through collaboration. This information can then be used as a basis for developing assignments, assessing student work, and advising students. Is it possible for educators to collaborate and increase the cultural porosity between secondary and post-secondary educators, and, if so, does the information help teachers improve their ability to prepare their students for college-level writing? More specifically, how can a collaborative program help high school teachers and college instructors understand the objectives and cultural values of their respective domains for the purpose of enhancing student preparedness and improving student outcomes?

The collaborative plan proposed here is called “Twin Teachers”, premised upon the “sister cities” or “twin towns” phenomenon that developed in the 20th century, adapted and applied to secondary and post-secondary writing educators. Twin town or sister city relationships pair two cities that are situated in different nations and cultural contexts, often connected by some preexistent similarity, such as population, cultural influence, name, or immigration/emigration history. The two cities then make organized efforts to enrich one another through cultural exchange, promoting cross-border connections, cultural understanding, and commerce (Sister Cities International). One consensus in the literature is the perception that high schools and colleges tend to be isolated from one another, bearing different pedagogical emphases, attitudes toward assessment, objectives, levels of academic freedom, and social perceptions. Neither understands intuitively what the other does; existing impressions rest on the basis of incidental rather than intentionally cultivated knowledge. What high school teachers know about college learning is based on the experience of being a college student, and what college instructors know about high school learning is based on the even more outdated experience of being a high school student. In a “sister cities” type of relationship, intentional collaboration between individual educators, with each acting as an independent representative of their respective place - not a mentor/mentee relationship - may provide an opportunity to promote cross-cultural understanding with the goal of improving student learning.

The Problem

This collaboration, then, pursues the cultural differences between high school and college instructors. Culture can be broadly defined as the practices, philosophies, social

customs, and ways of life of a group of people: the conditions under which people interact with one another, either by way of cooperation or resistance to those artifacts of culture. To narrow this concept further, educators at different levels and institutions have a multiplicity of professional cultural expressions, in pedagogy, terminology, ideology, oversight, working conditions, professional identification, objectives, attitudes toward students, attitudes toward colleagues, and more. The goal in this collaborative effort is not to necessarily reduce these cultural differences, or cause one expression of culture to be subsumed into another. The goal is to increase mutual understanding and respect, which enriches each culture and provides a basis for the alignment of goals. The expression of cultural differences, which sometimes causes transition issues for students when the strategies learned and demands placed at one level of schooling do not align with the needs of the next, are not necessarily undesirable. There are genuine differences in the purpose and role of the high school, community college, and university, and these differences are expressed culturally. The lack of porosity between the cultures is the problem that this project seeks to ameliorate.

Challenges with student articulation from high school English to college composition are widely recognized and have been long discussed. College writing instructors at most institutions have a collection of anecdotal folklore expressing a sense of wonder as to how certain students ever made it into English composition without further preparation. Students themselves will report that they are surprised by the differences between high

school and college writing work in both quality and quantity[1]; additionally, struggles are often correlated with socioeconomic markers (Appleby; Enders; Kidwell; McDonough; Kirst). Furthermore, these struggles are amplified by other life changes, such as learning to live away from home, increased personal and professional responsibilities, and suffering the consequences of underdeveloped time management skills (Bangser; Brockman et al. 47; Kidwell) Potential areas of improvement abound: more frequent or lengthy writing assignments (Enders), increased rigor (Arum and Roksa; Bangser 8-9; Kirst 52), greater opportunities for revision of written work (Bamberg; Enders; Scherff and Piazza 290), alignment of standards and objectives (Bangser 4, 9; Kirst 54), earlier intervention (Bangser 5), professional development for teachers (Bangser 10; Kirst 21-4), promotion of the reading/writing connection (Brockman et al. 44-5), critical thinking and inquiry-oriented assignments (Enders; Hillocks), greater focus on argumentative and analytical texts (Enders), higher quality feedback (Enders; Scherff and Piazza 290), and de-emphasis of test-directed writing (Fanetti et al.). Collaboration ranks high on the list of potentially productive approaches (see Chapter 2, Literature Review), but few collaborations focus specifically on the differences in professional culture between high school and college educators.

[1] A conclusion also supported by this author's own student surveys administered from 2016 to 2018.

Purpose and Plan Elements

The purpose of this project, then, is to develop a plan for an intentional, one-on-one collaborative effort that targets mutual cultural awareness between high school and college English instructors. This goal is meaningful because it promotes smoother transitions and improved outcomes for first-year composition students by allowing their instructors to modify their practice by aligning writing expectations and understanding the experience of teachers in different professional milieus. While the collaboration will involve instructors directly, the goal is an improvement in the learning environment for students, which is, in part, why students will be surveyed as a part of the preparatory work (see Chapter 3, Methodology).

The terms above (intentional, one-on-one, and collaboration) require some definition to meaningfully translate the vision of the project. *Intentional* refers to the purposeful nature of the collaboration; the intent is not to create incidental meetings or informal sites for teachers to speak generally about the differences among them based on personal experience alone, but to identify certain qualities of the cultural differences using a theoretical framework to hold targeted discussions of differences in pedagogy and teaching environment. *One-on-one* refers to the selected approach, pairing teachers together to share information and materials. In this plan, there is no mentor/mentee relationship, and the teachers are not grouped in a workshop or focus group. Rather, the teachers are paired as professional equals. This keeps the scope manageable enough to be used as an incremental improvement for smaller schools or institutions with fewer resources, and it keeps the focus on the impact of cultural differences in individual teaching practices. Finally, *collaboration* implies working together toward a common goal. While this project accepts that high

schools and colleges have different functions – and that these divergent functions are often both socially useful and beneficial to individuals – there are significant areas of common ground centered upon students and the mutual discipline of English and writing studies.

Interest in this collaborative approach derives from two experiences: the doctoral program in the English Department at Murray State University (MSU) as a natural site of collaboration between high school and college instructors and from a desire to consider ways that deliberate, reflective efforts towards improvement could be implemented in institutions lacking in funds and institutional support. In the program at MSU, education professionals at different levels of schooling are combined in the core courses; the opportunity for valuable exposure to unfamiliar ideas and practices are not promoted as an intentional benefit, but the benefit exists nonetheless. Next, much can be done with substantial funding and administrative buy-in, but what can the teachers do for themselves in the meantime? There must be an intermediate step between doing nothing and waiting for an infusion of resources that would pay for support staff, stipends for professional development, and expenses - an infusion that may never come. Furthermore, a successful collaborative program could help educators make the case for future funding and administrative support from within an institution; it could serve as an indicator that the teachers themselves can be responsible for identifying areas of ongoing professional development and reflection if given the chance.

Several stakeholders and professional organizations have identified increased collaboration as a way to help high school teachers understand what they are preparing their students for when it comes to college writing, and these efforts have enjoyed a modest proliferation in the past decade. While increased collaboration has been identified as a

productive strategy for bolstering teacher understanding and student preparation, actual implementation should be sensitive to local conditions and identified needs. For this reason, a one-size-fits-all approach is rarely recommended. Even a broad, nationwide collaborative network like the National Writing Project is organized and implemented locally (Gray). Aside from collaborations that arise incidentally (e.g. a meet-up at a conference, discussions between spouses teaching at different levels), most successful collaborators undergo extensive preparation, either by reflecting upon a set of working pedagogical values or diagnosing local needs. Accordingly, the exploratory work in this collaboration is developed in a specific local context with a sense that the strategies could be used by other educators in different contexts, which may produce different conclusions in the planning process.

The basic outline of the plan itself (Chapter 5) is based on the pairing of two English/composition teachers from a high school and college in a particular region; the local focus ensures that the teachers are working in a similar socioeconomic and political environment. Due to the proximity, there would be at least one in-person meeting; however, much of the communication would be electronically mediated to accommodate the schedules of busy teachers. The interface for collaboration would depend on the software used by participating schools; in this case, both subject colleges (see Chapter 3, Methodology) use G Suite products, like Google Hangouts and Google Drive. The collaborative sessions would span an academic year, successively addressing different elements of professional culture through written reflections and short videoconferencing meetings. The elements of professional culture addressed would begin with practical differences (assignments, pedagogical approaches) that would allow the teachers to make meaningful changes right away; then, having built a foundation of student-centeredness,

they would discuss more theoretical and profession-oriented topics. Based on local needs, topics could include:

- Writing prompts
- Writing topics
- Assessment of writing
- Qualities of college-level writing
- Student needs
- Disciplinary values
- Professional discourse
- Training/education requirements
- Administration and oversight
- Social perception

Each topic would involve sharing personal insights, sharing teaching materials and student work (if relevant), reading scholarship together, and writing short reflections. Finally, the reflections would be compiled and shared among all of the educators participating in the collaborative effort during the summer, to reduce year-end workplace pressures. This final component makes the benefits of collaboration more widely applicable in the local context and allows teachers to gather insights that they might have missed in their own conversations.

Research Questions and Methods

How can an intentional, one-on-one collaborative program help high school teachers and college instructors understand the objectives and cultural values of their respective domains for the purpose of enhancing student preparedness and improving student outcomes? The project is motivated by that question, and while it is not possible to answer the question completely within the context of this plan alone, it leads to other questions, such as:

- What are the significant differences in professional culture between high school and college English teachers that impact the student and teacher experience?
- Are educators aware of the significant differences in professional culture between high school and college English teachers?
- Do high school and college English teachers align with one another on the qualities of college-level writing?
- How do students perceive the difference in classroom practices as they transition from high school to college?
- Would an intentional, one-on-one collaborative program leading to greater awareness help high school teachers and college instructors improve their teaching?

This project is focused specifically on the planning process, which provides a practical and theoretical underpinning for applying effective collaborative practices to a local context. This research has two components, directed by the questions above:

- A **literature review** to provide context and support for action, a framework for discussion, and to identify effective practices for a collaborative effort between secondary and post-secondary educators, and
- A **combination of approaches (mixed method)** to further understand:
    - Teacher perception – the extent to which teachers perceive a cultural barrier between high schools and colleges (identifying the problem), input on the value of an individual level collaboration, and identification of potential pitfalls and complications. This research is performed using surveys and interviews to provide breadth and depth.

- Student perception – the extent to which students feel underprepared to meet the challenges of college-level writing, providing a deeper understanding of the context in which the collaborators would be working. This research was performed using a survey.

The literature review represents a meaningful part of a proper plan for a collaborative effort as described. However, there are specific local aspects that are typically unaccounted for in the published literature. One must take the pulse of a specific site – regardless of the size – to understand local attitudes and needs. For this reason, data was gathered within a region and among particular institutions to determine those perceptions and needs, while also providing a pattern for others who would replicate this work in a different context.

Surveys and interviews were administered to assess the perceptions of both instructors and students. The sites for data collection (Murray State University and Shawnee Community College) were chosen because of accessibility and because they fit a profile of smaller institutions with reduced ability to organize large scale projects, yet enjoying pre-existing tight-knit relationships with their communities and regional public schools. They provide a base of two different institution types (community college and state university) from which to make comparisons. The high schools chosen were Calloway County High School, Marshall County High School, and Graves County High School[2], since these three high schools have the largest number of students enrolling at Murray State University (Murray, *High Schools Fall 2018*; Murray, *High Schools Fall 2017*), and Anna-

[2] Graves County High School is actually the fourth largest contributor of students to Murray State University; however, an administrator at one of the top three high schools failed to respond to the request for permission to conduct surveys and interviews after an initial commitment to participate.

Jonesboro Community High School, Massac County High School, and Vienna High School, since these schools have the largest number of students enrolling at Shawnee Community College (Shawnee, *Current Students Fall 2018*; Shawnee, *Current Students Fall 2017*).

The students were surveyed with a limited set of short narrative answer questions designed to determine their perspectives on challenges and preparation for college composition. The survey is limited because of the reduced motivation for providing a response that students have – they will not be able to envision and articulate a change in their learning conditions in the same way that their teachers would. High school/college collaborations have more immediate practical significance for teachers than students.

High school and college teachers were surveyed with a more expansive instrument combining several Likert-type scale responses and two narrative responses. These questions surveyed attitudes toward students, understanding of the writing assignments, reading assignments, working conditions, and pedagogical strategies experienced on the other side of the cultural divide, and their beliefs regarding opportunities for professional development, the value of additional opportunities to gain awareness of conditions experienced by their colleagues, the definition of college-level writing, and the types of activities which would be valuable in increasing lacking awareness, assuming the lack exists.

Interviews were conducted among select instructors at the colleges and high schools. These interviews covered much of the same ground as the surveys, but the interviews provided an opportunity to explore perceptions in greater detail. Topics included background/beliefs, professional development, high school/college differences, student

preparedness, and, again, the types of activities which would be valuable in increasing lacking awareness, assuming the lack exists.

A mixed method approach, as used in this study through a combination of quantitative, non-experimental surveys and qualitative interviews, is typically associated with a pragmatic philosophy of knowledge generation that looks for "what works" (Creswell 231), triangulating multiple sources of data (Seidman xvi) to pursue a question, solve a problem, or explore a context (Almalki 291). In recent decades, empirical data in composition research has been held in suspicion because of the epistemological assumptions that are unfairly believed to be implied by its use: a simplistic positivist belief in the ability of the researcher to render the essence of reality through the interpretation of sensory experience (Takayoshi 557-62). However, this study and the resulting plan reflects an attitude toward research expressed by Kent State English professor Pamela Takayoshi in her recent attempt in *College Composition and Communication* to reinvigorate the use of empirical studies to investigate composing processes: "ethically motivated and theoretically informed researchers understand data as a building block toward knowledge – a partial representation of some aspect of an experience that is suggestive of the ways some people experience some things in this world" (561). In this study, the qualitative interview data will supplement the insights from the quantitative, non-experimental survey data, creating a profile of needs at the chosen sites, based on a representation of experience, to inform the collaborative plan.

Literature Review Summary

The literature review, which follows in Chapter Two, has three purposes: to establish the existence of a cultural divide between high school and college instructors and provide historical context for its existence, to determine the critical qualities of a successful collaborative effort by examining the types and purposes of other efforts in the field of teaching college-level writing, and to provide a conceptual and theoretical basis for the philosophy and purpose of this particular effort, since effective collaborations often carefully define philosophies and purposes to ensure that participants fit ideologically and concur on important objectives. The conceptual and theoretical basis includes a framework for understanding the cultural differences between high school and college instructors.

Establishing the Cultural Divide

The history of the cultural divide details the ways in which high school and college faculty play separate roles in the education system, as these roles have interplayed with external factors and broad social expectations to produce a fairly sharp distinction. The dissimilarity in professional culture between a typical teacher of high school senior English and an instructor of first-year college writing is greater than the distinction between that high school teacher and her middle school counterpart, even though the high school and college students themselves are culturally much closer to one another. Historically, the divide is rooted in the development of the university in the United States and the addition of scientific, industrial, and scholarly productivity to its traditional focus on undergraduate education, along with the evolution of the American high school, including rapid increases in its ubiquity and solidification of its mission in the late 19th and early 20th century (Cohen and Brawer; Marsh and Willis; Ornstein and Hunkins; US Department, *120 Years*; Veysey).

Approaches to High School/College Writing Instructor Collaboration

Next, the various approaches to collaboration between writing instructors at the secondary and post-secondary levels are explored by selecting examples, organized by scope, and describing the qualities that successful collaborations share. "Scope" refers to the size and purpose of the collaborative effort; many efforts are nationwide and well-funded, and others are intensively local or ad-hoc. Since the purpose is to develop a local, individual collaborative effort and provide a pattern for small-scale incremental improvements, an investigation based on scope is appropriate. Categories of scope and examples under consideration include:

- **National**: The National Writing Project (Gray).
- **Regional**: Looking Both Ways faculty development program between City University of New York and New York City High Schools (City University of New York); an ePortfolio effort between The Ohio State University and two high schools (Acker and Halasek); a focus group to develop a "conversations" based collaboration among high school and college educators in Maine (Donahue); a high school/university faculty partnership in northern Kentucky to address Common Core State Standards requirements by collaboratively designing assignments and professional development workshops (Kersell); a 2012 Panel Event between Bridgewater State University and southeastern Massachusetts high schools (Cox and Gimbel).
- **Institutional**: A collaborative design of pedagogical tools – assignments, assessments, teacher training modules – among community college and high school faculty in northwest Ohio (Richey et al.); a partnership between a major state university writing center and a small high school writing center (Hansen et al.); a

professional development experience between a large community college and a private Christian school focused on writing across the curriculum (McMullen-Light).

- **Individual**: An accidental collaboration between a high-school/college married couple (Brantley and Brantley); the High School-University Grading Exchange in central Illinois (Perrin); a co-teaching experience in central Illinois (Fortune; Fortune et al.); an individual college professor that spent a semester teaching at a high school in southeast Ohio (Daiker); a set of conversational meetings among high school and college teachers in western Washington state and southern British Columbia (Strachan).

Qualities of successful collaborations are drawn from these efforts, including frequent contact, intentionality, clear articulation of values and goals, joint preparation of materials, and professional equality. The Twin Teachers effort is then positioned as both an institution-level collaboration with some features of an individual collaboration.

Significance

This project has value both in providing an exploratory model for other educators to plan collaborative programs and, when the plan is implemented, for demonstrating the efficacy of individual collaboration in reducing cultural barriers between secondary and post-secondary educators, ultimately increasing student preparation for college-level writing. High school writing teachers would hopefully have a more thorough understanding of the expectations for which they are preparing their students, allowing them to refine their classroom work and objectives to align with college-level writing or the “college and career readiness” (Common Core, *Common Core*) contemplated in the standards that most

high school teachers are already required to integrate into their practice. Teachers involved in a collaborative effort may develop a first-hand experience of college expectations and practices, a major improvement over drawing upon haphazardly remembered personal experiences in college. Additionally, college instructors will presumably develop a sympathetic attitude toward the professional pressures experienced by their high school colleagues, perhaps accentuating the lack of formal pedagogical training received by those working in post-secondary education. Ultimately, the goal should be to move beyond dissipating energies through kvetching about student preparedness and the perceived deficiencies of other teaching professionals toward concrete and workable areas of personal improvement.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Collaborative efforts among secondary and post-secondary educators have been developed at various scales – from international to individual school – and for several purposes. The aim of this literature review, then, in addition to establishing and describing the cultural divide, is to survey the history of secondary/post-secondary instructor collaborations, to explore the purposes for which they are established (and by whom they are established, which impacts the purpose), and to describe the types of collaborations from large-scale to small-scale. The history and exploration of collaboration types situates the project in time and place and establishes the qualities of an effective collaboration. Understanding the purposes of other efforts provides a background for the development of an individual instructor collaboration, showing the extent to which it addresses local conditions, when educators want to make incremental improvements and dismantle cultural barriers but do not have the resources or need for a more extensive, even oversized project that would become a risky gamble rather than a small, manageable wager on meaningful improvement.

Then, this literature review provides a primer on the values and theoretical frameworks that underlie this particular instructor collaboration. How should the cultural differences between secondary and post-secondary instructors be understood? Should these differences be celebrated or minimized? How does this collaboration fit within current efforts in the field of English education? What is the primary writing objective for students at both levels, and is that objective based on something more substantial than “that is the

way it has been done" or "this is what needs to be learned for the test"? Different collaborators may diverge on these values or emphases, but every effort should explore an explanation for these larger questions, or risk languishing in aimlessness.

History of the Cultural Divide

The divide in professional culture between high school and college faculty is well-attested, even within the literature relating to collaborative efforts. Jacob Blumner (University of Michigan, Flint) and Pamela Childers (The McCallie School), who work in the field of writing centers and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) efforts, in one of their contributions to an essay collection on secondary/postsecondary collaborations (Blumner and Childers, *WAC Partnerships*), note that collaborators have noted a disconnect between high school graduation requirements and college expectations (Blumner and Childers, "Building" 93). Other contributors to their collection described the cultural distinctives between high schools and college in more detail. For some, colleges are considered to be fragmented, overspecialized, and disproportionately influential (Cox and Gimbel 19, 26). For others, there is a sense of differing missions and institutional structures (McMullen-Light 87), and an observation that writing teachers at the two levels seemed to have little sense of writing assignments at other levels (Cox and Gimbel 22). Other observers see significant, meaningful differences between high school and college bureaucracy, attitudes toward assessment, professional culture, acceptable class sizes, classroom pacing, instructor independence, student independence, student behavior, public perceptions, emphasis on specific writing skills, distinctions between disciplines, emphasis on pedagogy over research or administrative/service tasks, even pay scales and academic calendars, a

struggle known among those who try to align the work of regular instructors and high school dual credit instructors in a college composition department (Acker and Halasek 1-2; Appleby; Bangser; Fanetti et al. 79-83; Kirst; Moss and Bordelon 198; Noskin 35; Parks and Goldblatt 587; Strachan). The nature of these differences will be explored shortly through the lens of discourse communities and communities of practice, but the divide finds roots in the history of American education.

The need for high school/college collaboration leads naturally from the historical development of education in the United States; the cultural division between high schools and colleges extends from the roles that these institutions have been asked to fulfill. There are particular turning points in the history of secondary and post-secondary education in the United States that have contributed to the cultural isolation between the two levels of schooling. These familiar historical pivots include, first, the shift in emphasis in higher education from the small, typically religious, teaching-focused liberal arts schools that were founded in the early years of the republic to the practical, publicly funded land grant universities, oriented toward agriculture and industry, that were established in the wake of the federal Morrill Land-Grant Acts in the late 19th century. These universities contributed to considerable advances in the generation and distribution of scientific and industrial knowledge. There was an increasing emphasis on research and scholarly productivity that eventually extended to colleges outside the research universities. Additionally, the expansion and standardization of the ubiquity and mission of the high school was a significant turning point (Ornstein and Hunkins 73-75). While early high schools were funded almost entirely from local money and did not necessarily serve the majority of the population, the mission of the high school coalesced following the

recommendations of the National Education Association (NEA) Committee of Ten in 1893 (Marsh and Willis 38-40; Ornstein and Hunkins 77-80), leading to the standardization of high school curriculum nationally. Then, in the early 20th century, the availability of and attendance in high schools became widespread, with high school enrollment increasing rapidly. In 1870, there were around two high school graduates per one hundred seventeen-year-olds. By 1920, this number grew to nearly twenty graduates, and by 1940, the proportion exceeded fifty percent (US Department of Education 31). While the educational philosophies driving high school priorities changed with the expansion of high school attendance – even influenced by later NEA reports (Marsh and Willis 44) – the goals remained largely the same as the significance of the student as a person become more prominent.

The expansion of high schools led to a significant need for the preparation and professionalization of teachers; this impacted higher education through the establishment and expansion of "normal schools", or teacher training institutions, most of which have morphed into regular public universities with a major education preparation component. Professionalization and centralization then lead to more rigorous standards, development of pedagogical and epistemological theories, assessment, and political involvement, and these pressures, for better and for worse, fashioned the culture within which high school teachers work today.

As noted, the emphasis in higher education was simultaneously shifting - along with the expansion of high schools - in the late 19th and early 20th century from a focus on teaching undergraduate students and inculcating moral principles to research and the advancement of knowledge. In the same way that changes in secondary schooling prompted

the professionalization and credentialization of high school teachers, participation in the American professoriate began to demand a terminal degree and research productivity (Veysey 174-7). Graduate programs developed on a larger scale starting in the 1870s to meet this need, and throughout the 20th century, the demand for original contributions to knowledge by professors, as evidenced by published scholarly work, extended deeper into academia, beyond research universities. There are several reasons for this transformation in addition to the influx of public support represented by the Land-Grant Acts. Higher education has always struggled for social legitimacy in a culture that has long possessed a deep lode of anti-intellectualism (Veysey 5-6) and economic pragmatism (57-120); colleges had to adapt to such conditions to maintain their claim upon the intellectual and financial resources of the nation. Several models were influential in the adaptation of higher education to American conditions; these include the influential German universities (focused on research and intellectual investigation; Veysey 126), large business interests, and the aforementioned government investment in flagship institutions. None of these were solely influential. A uniquely American university system developed, rather, as all of these influences mingled, pulling higher education away from a focus on purely undergraduate education in pursuit of the broader goals of public service, economic influence, and cultural transmission[3]. As higher education historian Laurence Veysey notes in his pivotal history of the development of the American university, the social circumstances shaping the institution were divided and unstable: "[o]n the one hand, an almost insatiable need for the

[3] Regarding the social position of high school teachers and college instructors, it is possible that some of the differences in treatment derive from cultural gender expectations – the ranks of college instructors were historically dominated by men, and the primary and secondary levels were dominated by women (D. Johnson).

feeling of public approval developed; on the other, a hope that the university could serve as a refuge [for academics]" (17).

Thus, the educational and social function of secondary and post-secondary education diverged decisively, with the faculty of each operating in largely parallel worlds. High schools were focused on access and expansion, providing a basic general education for as many students as could be reached; they were sometimes called "the people's college" (Craig 166; Coffman 132) to underscore their democratic outlook. Colleges and universities went in several directions looking for influence and social legitimacy, siloing themselves within disciplines; as a result, the social position and professional demands of a professor fell far from the expectations of a secondary teacher. The social and cultural divide became so persistent that a seemingly intractable gulf even developed between faculty and students, as noted in the early 20th century, perhaps due to those who were attracted to the professoriate by the opportunity of purely intellectual pursuits (Veysey 294-302). Within higher education, the primary institution resisting this tendency would become the all-things-to-all-people community or junior college[4]; even so, community college faculty clearly work within the broader social and cultural expectations of post-secondary faculty, just not to the same extent as university faculty (Cohen and Brawer 81-111). As the 20th century progressed, the college would become more democratic and accessible – the "people's colleges" would, in the end, be actual colleges – but the divide among the faculty would persist.

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[4] This resisting presence could include some regional colleges that grew out of the normal school movement and certain private liberal arts colleges (often religious); however, the stance is one of resistance to a tendency, and thus, the tendency must be explored.

The high school/college cultural divide was recognized as a problem requiring meaningful attention even as the divide solidified throughout the early 20th century. Within the field of English – simply observing the pages of *The English Journal* (which, prior to 1939, dealt with both high school and college issues) – concerns were identified which included a lack of harmonization between high school and college English[5], a misalignment of purposes, or perhaps a failure to provide consistent purposes at all, especially from the college level (Steeves; Craig; Coffman).

In 1949, Alice Brower, a high school English department head in the suburban New York City area, wrote in *College English*[6] (which split from *The English Journal* in 1939 as a result of increasing specialization) of the enormous divide between high school and college composition classrooms. She criticized the isolation of college professors from the teaching work in high schools: "[t]oo often one feels an atmosphere of cloistered aloofness from where the professors live and think too confinedly within the cubicles of their highly specialized fields" (Brower 732). At this early date, she was aware of the controversial dearth of pedagogical knowledge among college instructors as a result of the lack of emphasis on teaching (Brower 730). One of her primary closing recommendations leans in the direction of collaboration, seeking an "open latch policy", and noting that "[w]herever

[5] As one observer notes, in 1922, "I think the only hope for the intellectual life of the higher educational institutions of the country is in intelligent and comprehensive cooperation between the secondary schools and the colleges and universities" (Coffman 139).

[6] Incidentally, this article contains a workable, concise statement of purpose for the composition classroom. She summarizes an article by Harvard professor Theodore Morrison: "he stressed the need for thinking, having something to say, and learning how to say it" (Brower 733).

better understanding is desired today between peoples, a personal visit is made, even if one must fly oceans" (Brower 734).

Much is left out in this historicization of the cultural divide between high schools and colleges; here, analysis is applied with a paint roller, not brushed in fine detail. However, the point is to establish that the divide exists, derived from what American society expects from its educational institutions, guided by ever-changing demands from stakeholders and influencers. Any solution will also be a historical reality, budding from the same conditions that created the divide. Furthermore, a proper understanding of the historical moments that led to a situation will provide a basis for a realistic approach to breaking barriers (and mending fences, when appropriate). An individual collaboration will not end the existence of cultural differences between educational levels even if an extensive dissolution of those differences were desirable (and it is not). Nonetheless, any collaborative project is inextricably influenced by these realities.

Types and Purposes of Collaborative Efforts in English Composition

Attempts to collaborative have steadily progressed in recent decades, representing many ways to open the "latch" depicted in Alice Brower's lament. When exploring the purpose and method for planning and implementing a collaborative project in a specific context, it helps to understand the various approaches to collaboration available to educators, understanding the general qualities that make a collaboration effective and the specific qualities that cause a particular approach to fit a situation. Potential approaches range in scope from the well-funded and national (like the National Writing Project) to the ad-hoc, informal convergences between teachers that happen at a conference or other

happenstance meeting. However, there are commonalities among the effective approaches that can be used to provide a basis for planning sound collaborations[7]. These qualities, which not all collaborative efforts share (though all share some), include frequent contact, intentionality, clear articulation of values and goals, joint preparation of materials, and, most importantly, equality and mutual respect. Analyzing these efforts - from the largest to the smallest - emphasizes the common traits that extend throughout these meaningful efforts.

The National Writing Project: Teachers Teaching Teachers

As the most prominent and well-regarded professional development arrangement that uses collaborative features, the National Writing Project (NWP), which grew out of the Bay Area Writing Project at the University of California (UC), Berkeley in the mid-1970s, provides a substantial body of meaningful experiential and numerical data for others embarking on collaborative efforts. The NWP, which is actually a national network of local writing projects hosted by universities, may describe itself as "professional development", but the tightly hewn collection of teacher-centered values that underpin it give it a collaborative character that is focused on mutual respect, colleagueship, the blending of theory and exceptional practice, and a vision of the importance of writing that reinforces its importance for those who teach it.

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[7] Of course, failed efforts could also provide valuable insight to the planner; unfortunately, such efforts are less likely to be published. This is a problem across many disciplines. Research that fails to find a significant effect is considerably less likely to be published, whether as a result of researchers choosing to withhold their work from publication or of journal editors allocating less space to such studies. Either way, the end result is a bias in the aggregate material available to other scholars, impacting the information available to the individual educator.

As recounted in NWP founder James Gray's memoir of the project's early days, the underlying philosophy grew out of a frustration with top-down planning and the engagement of outside experts who would parachute into functioning schools and tell experienced, skilled teachers how to teach (19-23). He describes his early experience with professional development sessions for teachers as mostly inadequate: one-off, random efforts, the value of which mainly came from the opportunity to socialize with colleagues (Gray 48-9). His reaction to these sessions converged with other experiences (in the face of a "writing problem" (45) at UC Berkeley) to form the first Bay Area Writing Project in the summer of 1974.

Their model seeks to train a group of exceptional teachers (from multiple levels) in an invitation-only summer institute where real teachers write real texts, share practical teaching ideas, and integrate writing and pedagogical research into their practice. These teachers, then, build on the natural *ethos* from their status as local practitioners to lead in-service programs for schools. These in-service programs are designed to be sustained and voluntary (Gray 102-4), ensuring that participants have buy-in and the training is extensive enough to develop rapport, reflect, and gather feedback. Finally, the funding model ensures that the project attracts professionals who are being compensated appropriately for their work. The NWP charges schools a fee for their in-service work and has attracted considerable funding from private foundations, state governments, and federal agencies.

The NWP is guided by a set of values that entirely dovetails with the identified qualities of successful collaborations: frequent contact, intentionality, clear articulation of values and goals, joint preparation of materials, and equality and mutual respect. Their statement of basic components (National Writing 141-8), which was developed

collaboratively by the NWP directors at an National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) conference in the late 1980s as a revision of a short letter composed by Gray designed to straighten out the California Writing Project (a statewide network), clearly exhibits the underlying values. While located at universities and directed primarily by English professors, local writing projects seek a diversity of participants from all grade levels and school settings (urban, suburban, rural), emphasizing collegiality and respect for prior experience. Local projects have a pre-defined administrative structure and a statement of purpose, exhibiting intentionality, and in-services are developed by the "teacher-consultants" (their term), not imposed from above. As Gray explains, while many of the current effective practices in teaching composition may have been refined or popularized by NWP sites (e.g. the focus on writing as a process, promotion of writing instruction at all levels of schooling), there is always an openness to new methods; the purpose is not to evangelize teachers with a certain method or ideology, but rather to discover what works and spread it around (Gray 84).

One of the primary benefits of studying the NWP for the planner of secondary/post-secondary collaborations is the collection of data demonstrating its efficacy. The NWP focuses on program evaluation as a basic component (147-8), and it makes data available on the impact of the project and teacher professional development in general (National Writing, "NWP Research"). This kind of data is rarely available to the collaborator, and it provides a starting point for persuading reluctant teachers and administrators that a multi-level collaboration is at least viable.

Regional Collaborative Efforts

While the NWP is the largest and most well-funded collaborative effort, others have also developed secondary/post-secondary collaborations on a larger scale. These are frequently spearheaded by state-level agencies or large local authorities, and they possess enough funding to provide stipends, materials, facilities, and some semblance of an ongoing existence. Typically multiple schools are involved, though sometimes it involves one college collaborating with multiple high schools. While these efforts do not have the broad internal coherence that the NWP enjoys, the smaller scales allow for more flexibility and applicability to local needs. They take many different shapes; some reflect the approach of the NWP, and others respond to specific local exigencies, such as a new, statewide writing-intensive examination (City University of New York i), a response to state articulation commission recommendations (Richey et al.), or implementation of Common Core State Standards (Kersell).

The first is similar in mission to the NWP: to bring teachers together to learn from one another. In 1998, in response to a new writing-intensive state exam and elevated admissions requirements at the City University of New York (CUNY), writing instruction leaders started a series of seminars between CUNY instructors and teachers from New York City high schools, connection writing educators from two of the nation's largest colleges and school systems[8]. This complete, sustained, well-documented program, called "Looking Both Ways" (LBW), began with written reflection as a central value (City 8); as a result,

[8] This collaboration, in 1998, represented an early use of asynchronous Internet-based planning (City 5).

insights from this project were compiled into a book, allowing them to be shared more widely, adding value to their hard work[9].

Their effort was built on shared approaches (called "assumptions"): learning from one another, using inquiry as a tool for professional development, sharing work products, and considering teachers to be readers and writers along with their students (City 1-2). Their approach was democratic and inclusive, not focused on the greater disciplinary influence and scholarly productivity of university professors (City 4). The goals were ambitious, but they had significant administrative support to build "ongoing professional communities" (City 7) providing mutual support and promoting the high school academic rigor that has been associated with higher college completion rates (Kirst 52). The teachers found areas of consensus; reading and writing were conceived of as complementary activities, with some agreement on the role of the personal in academic writing, and they identified misalignment of assessments and common pedagogical approaches as an area of inquiry and targeted improvement (City 10-1). They considered their collaboration a model of "critical colleagueship" (City 21-30), as defined by Brian Lord. Critical colleagueship was enacted through empathy, ambiguity, openness and negotiation, and "productive disequilibrium". The lessons learned from the program, summarized in the final chapter "What We Learned", derive from sustained, mutual, even physical contact and a sense of equality among participants: they learned the value of prioritizing community (including allocating resources of time and money), amplifying preexisting strengths, dissolving

[9] Unfortunately, this effort is cited infrequently in the literature on the subject, indicating that its insights have not been used to their fullest extent.

stereotypes of professional practice and culture, and bringing the complexity of language and literacy into an engaged classroom (City 96-9).

To provide one example of productive inquiry, they sought to increase the porosity of the barrier between theory and practice, making reference to Thomas McLaughlin's concept of "vernacular theory" (City 32-3). This relates to the broader philosophy of teacher research (Dana and Yendel-Hoppey 5-12). They try to remember that theory without purpose or practice is not useful: "theory does not remain an exclusive property of university intellectuals but a tool to make sense of all of our lives—and to improve them" (City 36). Clearly, this effort drew out a certain perception of the cultural distinctions between high school and college faculty – these contrasts between theory and practice would not have been made if some did not see an occasion to make them – but the result was to increase the awareness of how high school teachers often perceive the work of college professors, whether or not the perception results from a failure of substance in research or a failure to communicate its value. This provides one instance of an insight that college instructors could take away; the purpose was not merely to indoctrinate high school teachers in the ways of academia to better align their work with the values of the college, but for both sides to grow as teachers, inquirers, and leaders.

Another effort, six years later, was more limited in scope, narrowly focused, and oriented toward empirical research, and yet it still represents an effective regional approach to collaboration between levels of schooling. In 2004, Ohio State University and two high schools that send many students to the university worked together to create an ePortfolio project: an electronically mediated site for students to received feedback from both high school and college instructors. The lead researchers, Stephen Acker and Kay

Halasek, were driven by the observation that rigor and innovation are often given short shrift in high school classrooms because of the pressures of testing and other accountability metrics; as a result, students are not always ready for the demands of college writing, even when they have met graduation requirements. The implication is that the behaviors needed to meet graduation requirements and pass standardized tests are not necessarily the behaviors needed to excel in first-year college-level writing (1-2). They do not blame the high school teachers for the situation. In fact, they explain that "[r]ather than pointing accusatory fingers at one another, K-12 education and higher education have reasons to collaborate on student success" (Acker and Halasek 2).

Their purpose, then, was to use the ePortfolio system to create an environment for teacher feedback that crosses institutional boundaries, testing five hypotheses: (1) students receiving feedback from both high school and college instructors will improve their writing, (2) response methods differ between high school and college instructors, (3) these differences (if they exist) negatively impact student writing and revision, (4) students receiving feedback from multiple high school *and* college faculty readers will make improved decisions about revision, and (5) some response methods produce stronger student revisions (Acker and Halasek 4). Clearly, they were looking for student writing improvement, but the second hypothesis indicates that researchers anticipated differences in professional culture between high school and college faculty, as evidenced by their differing response habits.

The results (Acker and Halasek 6-8) from this study indicate a significant improvement in the quality of student work from first to final draft when feedback was given from both high school and college instructors, confirming the first hypothesis;

however, there is no indication that there was a control group *not* receiving college instructor feedback, and one would rarely expect the final draft to be *worse* than the first draft in most cases. As a result, the real-life import of this first "confirmed" hypothesis is questionable, though the students gave a positive self-response to their ePortfolio experience. However, the study found differences in high school and college instructor feedback methods, confirming the second hypothesis. Particularly, high school teachers follow a criteria baseline for good writing – making sure all of the fundamental elements are in place - while college instructors focus on situational appropriateness[10]. The third hypothesis was unconfirmed (no consistent effect was found for the different feedback methods on student writing), the fourth hypothesis was confirmed (students reported that they appreciated the extra feedback, and their writing did improve), and the data on the fifth hypothesis was too limited to draw any conclusions.

As background for this collaborative effort, the result of Acker and Halasek's second hypothesis was meaningful, confirming differences in the way that teachers from separate professional cultures interact with their students; they also found another difference in the attitude of high school and college instructors toward the role of voice in student writing (7, 9). However, the underlying qualities of their collaboration likely provided a basis for successfully improving real student writing. First, the high school and college faculty collaboratively developed the writing tasks, and responsibility for providing feedback was shared equally (3). Also, they clearly stated their values – alignment of purposes between

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[10] This tendency relates to the definition of college-level writing elsewhere in this literature review, which focuses on rhetorical intentionality. Acker and Halasek's findings also mirror the findings described in Chapter 4 under the third research question "Do high school and college English teachers align with one another on the qualities of college-level writing?".

high school and college for the benefit of students, with student success being the shared value – and the collaboration was built on respect, not blame (1-2). While the authors call for further studies and more data, the effort was perceived to be productive for the teachers and for the students (10).

The next regional collaborative effort was a plan developed for the 2005-6 academic year called the "Calderwood Conversations". This meticulous "preliminary exploratory process" (Donahue 2), designed for implementation among colleges and high schools in Maine, provides a model for context-sensitive planning and clear articulation of goals. The planner, University of Maine-Farmington's Tiane Donahue, found in her literature review, among other things, that high school and college instructors often misunderstand one another (their sources of information are typically experiential and unintentional), that students undergo shifts in expectations as they enter college, and that high school teacher voices are rare in the extant literature (2-5).

The plan was contextualized through concerns about college readiness in Maine. Donahue performed focus group meetings and interviews to develop a research question. These qualitative methods were chosen because of the exploratory nature of her work; Donahue's goal was to develop questions collaboratively rather than impose them based on research interests. As a result of these focus groups and interviews, areas for further development were identified, including process, peer review, forms/genres, assignment prompts, evaluation, research/citation, motivation, authenticity (Donahue 11-2).

Ultimately, the Calderwood Conversations were designed for eight monthly sessions, each one three hours long (with an included meal), following assigned roles and sharing literature. While Donahue planned to publish the outcomes, these results have not been

found. However, the project apparently occurred and was successful (at least to one participant), based on a listserv email (6 July 2018) from Patricia Hager[11], the Writing Center Coordinator at the University of Southern Maine. In this listserv posting, Hager reported that, as a college instructor, she gained insight about the curricular pressures experienced by high school teachers ("an imposed...curriculum requires that you also teach an assortment of other things that fall under the category of 'language arts.'") as well as decreased instructional time and a greater diversity of behavioral issues ("I learned how difficult it is to teach writing in 45 minute intervals...[to] people with not-yet-fully-developed frontal lobes but fully developed hormones"). She recommends, as a result of the Calderwood Conversations, to "start with a level playing field"; participants ought to respect one another as colleagues.

Sometimes, state-level changes in standards, objectives, and curriculum uncover the need to promote collaboration, especially when those changes result in a greater emphasis on alignment with college. Kentucky was the first state to adopt the Common Core State Standards in 2010, and a majority of states and federal territories have since adopted the standards (Common Core, "Standards"). The standards explicitly envision high school alignment with college-level work (Common Core, *State Standards*; Kentucky Department of Education), creating a natural demand for collaboration. From 2011 to 2013, Nancy Kersell, a lecturer at Northern Kentucky University (NKU), was involved in a partnership among high school and university faculty that designed assignments aligned with the Common Core standards and created professional development workshops for high school

[11] Attempts at correspondence have been made, with no response.

and middle school teachers. Kersell described the exchange of pedagogical knowledge (such as instruction, assignments, and curricula) as "rare" between high school and college faculty (23). The professional development workshops – to judge from the titles – were designed to address this oversight; for example, one workshop is titled "What Is the College Writing Classroom Really Like?" (24). The program at NKU is one example of sustained, intentional collaboration. Such alliances between high school and college faculty bring genuine college writing expectations to the high school classroom by providing an opportunity for high school teachers to experience those expectations, at the same time offering college instructors the chance to reflect on their own pedagogical choices in view of what their students have learned in high school.

Finally, from a Writing Across the Curriculum[12] (WAC) perspective, Michelle Cox (Dartmouth) and Phyllis Gimbel (Bridgewater State) describe a panel event at Bridgewater State University in Massachusetts that brought together high school teachers from various content areas with their college-level counterparts. As a WAC effort, this collaboration is not limited to the English department or writing program but falls squarely within the interests of those concerned about student writing and professional culture within educational systems. They gathered eighty professionals together for a day of discussion. Held in April 2012, this panel event also occurred in the midst of the implementation of the Common Core State Standards, so teachers were concerned about the effect of the standards

[12] WAC is the movement within composition scholarship and practice that engages in formal efforts to emphasize writing in all disciplines, not just within English and the humanities.

and corresponding curricular changes on their teaching in addition to their concerns about student writing (Cox and Gimbel 22).

Cox and Gimbel administered an IRB-approved questionnaire following the session, and the sense of the teachers involved is that an opportunity to collaborate was immensely useful, especially (unexpectedly to the organizers) the ability to collaborate with teachers from other disciplines. Teachers also expressed a desire for more collaboration in the future that would include the exchange of materials and student work from other disciplines and pedagogical practices (Cox and Gimbel 25)

Following the recommendation for frequent contact as a feature of successful collaborations, the authors noted the disadvantage of a one-off effort for creating lasting change: "a single workshop, without follow-up, does not have much impact" (Cox and Gimbel 33). Besides providing a model for regional alliances among teachers at different levels that could be integrated into a preexisting conference or local meeting cheaply and conveniently, much of the value of this effort for the Twin Teachers plan comes from the case that Cox and Gimbel make for collaboration. An analogy can be drawn between the WAC effort as a whole, which seeks to improve all disciplines by emphasizing the value of writing and rhetorical skill more broadly by building bridges among departments within the insular modern university, and collaboration between high school and college faculty, which have their own kind of insularity because of their cultural differences. The authors cite former UC Berkeley president Clark Kerr's introduction to the modern research university *The Uses of the University* to establish that higher education has been and still is overspecialized and fragmented (Cox and Gimbel 19). Perhaps this fragmentation is even more complete vertically (between levels) as it is horizontally (between academic

disciplines) because of the cultural differences; teachers are separated by discipline *and* level. While there is no catchy movement name for cross-level collaboration as there is for WAC, the need for information transfer is just as significant.

Institution Pairings

The distinction between a regional collaboration and an institution pairing (which simply refers to two schools working together) is subtle. However, a pairing has the potential to address narrowly local exigencies, while a regional collaboration is a more appropriate tool to address major state or national educational initiatives. The distinction, then, can be subtle because there is significant overlap in these purposes; large-scale changes in the educational landscape play out differently based on contextual details at the local level. It is important, then, to look for differences in purpose and implementation based on the scope of a collaboration. What is the problem that the educators are trying to solve, and how does the scope and design of their effort address that problem?

An institution pairing in northwest Ohio, implemented in 1994, was actually designed to address a state level initiative (Richey et al.). The collaboration leaders – three professors at Owens Community College (Toledo and Findlay, Ohio) and a high school teacher from Findlay High School – were motivated by their participation in a statewide program (EECAP) that was an outgrowth of a 1981 state advisory commission recommending "formal faculty communication links" (qtd in Richey et al. 63). This ambitious project set out to collaboratively develop a process writing assignment for each grade level, a holistic writing assessment tool, and a faculty training module. Integrating composition theory (specifically writing process and portfolio evaluation) and effective practices for collaboration, they sought to measurably improve student writing and generate productive high school/college

relationships as envisioned by state educational agencies. Their approach was fairly unique for an institution pairing; an extended time frame (two years) and external grant funding combined to permit a strong, sustained, well-documented collaboration that also remained local and focused.

The products of their work – a writing assignment, an assessment tool, and a training module – were all developed with full input from participants at all levels. The full-process writing assignment was designed to be consistently used by all students at a particular grade level, building from a personal experience essay for high school freshmen to a documented argumentative essay for high school seniors, which aligns with the typical expectations for first-year college composition. For the assessment tool, they created a holistic rubric that the teachers could use flexibly to fit into their preexisting grading approach. Finally, for the training module, they created a packet for each assignment. The teachers met to discuss and practice based on the training materials; the authors reported "impressively consistent consensus" on assessment (Richey et al. 66). A portfolio element was included to give teachers historical data on each student's writing.

Part of the success of the program relied on the collegiality between the high school and college teachers: "[t]here was no sense that a 'higher level' faculty had come to straighten out 'lower level' teachers" (Richey et al. 69). Thorough planning, physical proximity, and funding added to the benefits of mutual respect to allow the teachers to sustain their effort, making it an ongoing presence in their professional lives. Finally, all of the materials were developed together, creating a sense of buy-in, since they were not created and imposed without input. The authors conclude with a set of helpful

recommendations for other collaborators based on realistic goals, broad participation, open communication, hard work, and ongoing modifications (Richey et al. 71).

The relationship between Findlay High School and Owens Community College was forged between relatively equal schools, two medium-sized institutions in the same area in the Midwestern US. Another collaboration, between writing centers at a high school and major state university in the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metropolitan area, showed how even "unequal" partnerships can be productive (Hansen et al.). The University of Minnesota (U of M) is a flagship state research university that enrolls over 50,000 students; their multi-location writing center corresponds to their large size. On the other hand, the writing center at Burnsville High School, a suburb of Minneapolis/Saint Paul, was headquartered in a teacher's classroom. In keeping with her own values of small scale, incremental improvement, Marie Hansen developed a small writing center at Burnsville after she had some success with after-school conferences. Based on research and consideration of available support, she decided to use student peer tutors to staff the writing center, which would give them experience and valuable volunteer hours to use on their résumés. The connection with U of M was developed out of discussions with the writing center director and graduate students; they developed a model to train student tutors by taking them to the U of M campus, where they would undergo consulting sessions with examples of their own writing. In doing so, several participants benefited: the high school students received first-hand experience in the expectations of college-level writing (which they could then share with other high school students); Hansen, as a high school teacher, received some of the same experience along with an opportunity to connect meaningfully with a major university where many Burnsville students would go, and the college consultants – many of

them graduate students in English – would experience real high school student assignments and writing.

Finally, in the Kansas City metropolitan area, another set of "unequal" schools partnered to provide professional development from a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) perspective (McMullen-Light). In this case, instructors at Metropolitan Community College – Longview (MCCL) developed a connection with Summit Christian Academy (SCA), a faith-based K-12 school. While they differed in mission and student composition – for starters, one is secular and the other is religious – they both agreed on the importance of writing in all disciplines and an emphasis on critical thinking (McMullen-Light 90). The partnership started with an attitude of reluctance from participants at MCCL because of their "limited knowledge of teaching at K-12 levels" (McMullen-Light 89). Their collaboration took the form of two workshops conducted by MCCL faculty for SCA teachers; feedback was collected through a combination of surveys and interviews. While it would have been easy for such a collaboration to exclude the possibility of input from high school teachers – a mere bomb drop of insight and "expertise" from college instructors to high school teachers – the desire of the MCCL faculty to orient themselves to K-12 instruction and intent of teachers at both institutions to learn from one another (McMullen-Light 87) kept this project in the realm of collaboration rather than professional development consulting. Additionally, they took advantage of their geographical proximity to create a sustained partnership that included the development of a writing center at SCA, in addition to the two successive workshops. The author, Mary McMullen-Light (at the time, the WAC director at MCCL), provided a list of recommendations to others planning interinstitutional

connections, including timely planning, setting aside fear, an emphasis on open, honest discussion, site visits, and collegiality (McMullen-Light 108)

Individual Collaborative Efforts

Individual collaborations are a grab bag; these are individual teachers shoveling at the base of the wall between high school and college educators. In some cases, they were not even aware that they were collaborating, but their work advanced many of the same goals. While the qualities of many of these attempts do not reflect the qualities of strong collaborations in their planning, the insights gained, like mutual respect and an experiential basis for alignment of assignments and objectives, carry the same spirit.

The first is a non-collaboration collaboration; the Brantleys, a married couple from north-central Florida, each represent high school and university faculty, and they provide "communiqués from a pedagogical marriage", or insights from their own experience of the differences and similarities between one another. While framed in a somewhat tongue-in-cheek manner, this forced collaboration by marriage serves to emphasize the extent to which "high school teachers and professors of English in college and universities have all too little to say to one another" (Brantley and Brantley 214). Insights from their relationship include similarities (an emphasis on the balance of descriptive and prescriptive grammar and the value of communication/inculturation), differences (the need for classroom management, professional prestige, cultural assumptions, relationships with subject matter and the "canon"), and suggestions to make things better ("we need to talk to each other" (218), creation of intentional sessions for communication, co-teaching). While this article does not provide a workable model for replication - though it would be remarkable if two educators made collaboration the catalyst for their marriage – it indicates the

importance of collecting opportunities for reflection and improvement wherever they can be found.

More conventionally, in the late 1970s, Robert Perrin, today a veteran educator at Indiana State University, was a young instructor with some high school teaching experience finishing his doctorate at the University of Illinois (U of I). He became the coordinator of the Association for Practical Composition at U of I, which provided professional development opportunities for high school and college instructors. As a means of promoting high school/college articulation by providing an opportunity for high school students to have their papers graded by college instructors – thereby revealing some of the hidden expectations of college-level writing to them – Perrin organized the High School-University Grading Exchange. For a small stipend, he graded papers that were written in response to an argumentative prompt. However, he took efforts beyond merely grading papers and held follow-up sessions at local high schools. While the intent was to interface with students, his interactions with teachers were revealing. From them, he learned that the teachers had many questions about how they should be preparing their students, questions of emphasis (research or grammar?), genre (argument or creative writing?), and voice (Perrin 409-10). In doing so, Perrin stumbled into a collaborative effort that allied high school and college teachers in the service of some common goals. While this effort did not necessarily begin with many of the values of successful collaborations, he added them as he found his feet, expressing a profound respect for the hard work and constraints of his high school colleagues and committing to additional contact with teachers even when it was outside of the purview of his initial goals (Perrin 408, 410).

Set in the context of a university English department with a longstanding commitment to cooperation with high schools, Ron Fortune of Illinois State University describes a 1983 "teaching exchange" among university, community college, and high school instructors in central Illinois, where the participants would make individual visits to a classroom at a different level from their own (Fortune; Fortune et al.). In doing so, the high school teachers would bring to their students a "firsthand account" of college-level writing, and the community college and university instructors experienced the fast-paced, exuberant, even noisy, conditions under which high school teachers work (Fortune et al. 15-6). The teachers involved reported an improvement in their teaching practices that included an expansion of problem-solving assignments, the integration of rhetorical context and rhetorical choices, and the inclusion of discovery and revision creating awareness of the writing process (Fortune et al. 17).

Another individual outreach occurred in spring 1995 when a Miami University (Ohio) English professor was relieved from his teaching duties to teach at Princeton High School in Cincinnati. He relates the impact of his experience through the lens of anxious dreams that he had leading up to and during the semester. These dreams reflected his sense of inadequacy as he worked through "the most challenging and difficult teaching assignment I have ever undertaken" (Daiker 4). He felt "scriptless" in the classroom, as if he had nothing to say, even though, as an English professor, he knew the material. It seems that this experience reflects, in part, the cultural differences between high school and college teachers; he did not have the language or the behaviors that professionals working in the high school had learned as they adapted to learning conditions (e.g. discipline problems). Daiker gained respect for high school teachers, who, according to him, have a higher level

of “self-giving” than college instructors (10), and he recommends the experience to others as a way of improving their self-understanding and pedagogical effectiveness.

Finally, in the mid-1990s, Wendy Strachan of Western Washington University recounts her efforts to meet with a group of high school senior-level English teachers over about eight weeks, an effort that grew out of a meeting at a conference. Her ultimate purpose was to illustrate the value of conversations between levels of schooling. Instructors often spend their professional development time listening to professionals provide mediated, formal information, but very little time talking to one another. This cross-border collaboration – Strachan is from a university in Washington (United States) while the core group of participating high school teachers was from a high school in Vancouver, British Columbia (Canada) – generated important insights into the ways that high school teaching can frequently be test directed. She observed that exams “influence decisions about what kind of writing to assign, how to assess it, and how much time to spend on it” (139). They also discussed the differences and role of structure and genre rules, varying attitudes toward which may derive from the way high school teachers and college instructors view the relationship between their students and the material. These differences of stance may be necessary, but they result in a communicative barrier between teachers at different levels, which ultimately adds to articulation struggles for students. Contrasts in practices and goals, then, were observed, but there was no consensus on how to respond to the differences. Further understanding would require more dialogue, but this short series of roundtable sessions established, for these teachers, the importance of creating the dialogue itself.

The Position of Twin Teachers

The concept underlying the proposed effort in this plan – an organized dialogue between individual instructors - falls somewhere between an institution-level collaboration and an individual collaboration. As an institution-level collaboration, it seeks to address issues that exist in a broader context among schools, including problems of alignment and student articulation. As an individual collaboration, it seeks to help individual instructors break down barriers between one another, develop solidarity around those nucleation sites where they share something in common, and create an experiential (or near-experiential) understanding of the learning conditions where the students are coming from or where they are going. Regardless of which aspect of this collaborative plan that a participant prefers to emphasize, the lessons drawn from other collaborators, such as setting clearly expressed goals, acting with those goals in mind, maintaining an ongoing presence, jointly preparing materials or products (e.g. reflective materials, curated reading lists), and maintaining a conscious attitude of respect and equality, provide a fixed and stable basis upon which to build a collaboration that is likely to succeed, generating reflection and essential questions for future work even when solid answers are not forthcoming.

Conceptual Framework: Cultural Differences & Goals

Cultural differences exist among high school teachers and college instructors, and collaboration – in all of its forms – provides a chance to break through those cultural barriers for the benefit of students and for the teachers themselves. However, before the teachers start talking, they could benefit from a toolbox of concepts to help them understand one another. For teachers of English and composition, areas where a conceptual

framework could provide orientation include the nature and attributes of the cultural differences among them, a theoretical insight into the goals that they are setting for their students, and an understanding of the professional aims of a particular collaboration: where are they situated in the academic world, and how that differs from where they want to be.

Understanding Cultural Differences: Discourse Communities & Communities of Practice

There is a cultural difference between high school and college educators, including those practicing English and English composition, the existence of which is established through historical study and observations from inside and outside academia. Regrettably, these differences are difficult to conceptualize and discuss. There is a considerable corpus of anecdote and "teacher lore" (to adopt a term from Dana and Yendol Hoppey) around the topic of practical, pedagogical, and vocational differences between the two levels of schooling. However, to provide a dispassionate ground for understanding difference and a theoretical basis upon which high school and college educators can build their own conversations, two concepts from the fields of linguistics and social sciences are applied here to describe the nature of these cultural distinctions: discourse communities (from linguistics) and communities of practice (from education and the social sciences). The use of these two frameworks keeps the emphasis both upon *discourse*, which is ultimately the primary method for collaboration and the principal interest of writing teachers, and upon *practice*, through which discourse makes an impact on others, including students. Definitions for these concepts are drawn from linguist and University of Michigan professor

emeritus John Swales for discourse communities, and from education theorist Etienne Wenger for communities of practice.

Discourse Communities

The concept of a discourse community has influenced the field of rhetoric and composition in recent decades; as a concept, it is more useful for describing professional cultures and writing genres than the related concept of "speech community", which works better for oral discourse and the exploration of factors such as geographical location and socioeconomic class[13], which are unconnected to professional goals. As Swales explains, there is a distinction between a speech community, which serves as a medium for socialization and solidarity, and a discourse community, which is directed toward goals, with socialization and solidarity as a side effect (24). To provide a working definition for this goal-oriented "sociorhetorical" community, Swales offers six characteristics that are "necessary and sufficient" for a discourse community: an agreed "set of common public goals", "mechanisms of intercommunication" among members, the use (or "uptake") of information by participants, the development and use of genres to play upon the expectations of members, a shared set of definitions for specific terms, and a critical mass of experts with a mastery in the area of expertise (24-7). The discourse communities of high school English teachers and college English/composition instructors exhibit these necessary and sufficient features; while overlap exists, they differ significantly enough to

[13] It is important to note that the exclusion of "socioeconomic and cultural elements" is considered by some to be a major weakness in the concept of discourse communities as defined by Swales (Bizzell, qtd. in Martín-Martín 155).

be identified as separate communities. These differences, then, can be understood as differences in professional culture.

First, there are differences in agreed-upon public goals. While not all teachers in a particular group share in all of the goals in each particular instance, the public statements of influential organizations or regulatory bodies are generally agreed to be constructive and authoritative, and these statements can be used effectively to defend assertions among members. Examples of these documents for college composition instructors include the *WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition* (developed by the Council of Writing Program Administrators, or CWPA) and the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* (collaboratively developed by the National Council of Teachers of English, the CWPA, and the NWP). These documents contain objectives for college-level writing but are also imbued with values (critical thinking, writing as a social act) that, if resisted or ignored by a participant, excludes one from the discourse community or damages one's standing. Underscoring important differences in the teaching conditions for high school teachers, the corresponding statements for secondary English objectives would be found (at least since 2010, in most states) in the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy* (CCSS), which were developed and are implemented with much greater state regulatory involvement. Differences can be found even within the language that these documents use to describe themselves. While the CCSS provides a progression of objectives or standards with which instructional efforts must be aligned, the WPA Outcomes Statement is explicitly focused on outcomes, noting that "setting of standards to measure students' achievement of these Outcomes has deliberately been left to local writing programs and their institutions" (Council, *WPA* 1). There is an expectation that college

programs have more independence, and this language is woven into the statements of agreed-upon goals within each discourse community. The content is similar – both statements envision critical thinking, thorough integration of sources, and rhetoric – but the high school documents possess more standardization and specificity. This difference in presentation is expressed in the different ways that high school and college teachers conceive of and discuss their work.

Next, the mechanisms of communication and the uptake of information among members – Swales's second and third criteria - differ between high school and college instructors. The primary difference is disciplinary; internal communication within the high school teacher discourse community tends to transcend disciplines and information is disseminated locally. At a particular high school, for instance, English teachers, history teachers, and mathematics teachers will enjoy a higher level of interpersonal contact and solidarity than their college counterparts, who tend to associate themselves with their discipline. As a result, their mechanisms of communication differ. For high school teachers, mechanisms of communication are directed pragmatically toward the workplace, through teachers' unions or local/state education agencies, and content is likely to be meaningful to teachers in general. For college instructors, journals and conferences take on a greater importance, reflecting the emphasis upon an internal disciplinary conversation emphasizing theory and knowledge generation.

Along with the mechanisms of communication, each discourse community uses particular genres to communicate, and these genres are used and understood by the active members of each community. For high school teachers, these genres are typically classroom oriented; teachers have an intuitive sense, for instance, of the genre of the lesson plan. A

college instructor who is asked to write a lesson plan, on the other hand, absent any experience in secondary education, will provide a ham-handed example of the genre since formal lesson plans are not generally used in college classrooms. Post-secondary educators, even in English and composition, will be much more comfortable with the genre of the scholarly article, which is patterned upon similar genres in the natural sciences, with its argumentative stance, disciplinary grounding, and precise, analytical wording. High school teachers are much less likely to encounter this genre in their everyday work, while it is part of the price of admission for college instructors.

Within those genres, each discourse community has developed a particular lexis, including widely understood abbreviations and acronyms. The corpus of professional terms for a high school teacher includes those acronyms driven by the demands of a diverse student body, such as “IEP”, or Individualized Education Program, a written plan for a child with special needs, or terms implicated by effective pedagogical practices, such as the verbs which classify learning objectives in Bloom’s taxonomy. College instructors are more likely to use terms that refer to disciplinary distinctions or study within a discipline (“rhet-comp”, “poststructuralism”) or academic labor issues (“contingent faculty”). In practice, the use of these terms facilitates communication internally while creating a higher barrier of entry for those outside the discourse community.

Finally, each discourse community has a “threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discoursal experience” (Swales 27). This provision is defined to ensure that the community has some independent existence that does not rely on a limited number of individuals. Each of these discourse communities has a national presence, hundreds of thousands of participating members, and considerable societal

investment in their ongoing existence. However, a smaller discourse community consisting of, say, “current and former governors of Nebraska” might have a specific lexis, methods of communication, and agreed-upon public goals, but lacks a critical mass of novices and experts to define a discourse community under Swales’s definition. Newcomers to that particular “community”, instead, would pattern their discourse based on their experiences in other discourse communities (“state representatives”, “Republicans”, or “attorneys”). There is no question that high school and college educators have the ratio of novices and experts necessary to perpetuate the existence of their own discourse communities.

While the concept of discourse communities is influential, its use is not without controversy (Martín-Martín 155; Bizzell; Mauranen). There are certainly subgroups within the respective discourse communities of college and high school teachers; the discourse community of community college instructors, for instance, exhibits considerable overlap with both. However, these subgroups, when if placed with one another based on similarity, could be clustered into larger groupings of “college English instructors” and “high school English teachers”. Regardless of the actual boundaries between the discourse communities, which could itself be a topic of discussion in a collaborative effort, using the concept of discourse communities to understand the cultural differences between secondary and post-secondary educators creates an occasion for teachers to reflect how discourse – the means through which teachers talk to one another – keeps them together and holds them apart. While a community’s methods of communication facilitate the efficient transfer of information, socialize members into certain controlling conversations, and serve as a spur-of-the-moment shibboleth for identifying members of that community, they also serve as a moat, barring outsiders from understanding the nuances of the group’s values and goals.

When educators from the high school and college each invite the other to understand the conventions of their respective discourse communities, both profit from the resulting pidgin tongue that would allow them to talk to one another, especially at those points where their goals converge. Student needs demand a certain level of alignment between high school and college, and the occasion to communicate has genuine potential to increase that transfer of information for the sake of the learner.

Communities of Practice

In the real world of teaching and learning, teachers do more than talk to one another; they turn their talk into action. They are *practitioners* of knowledge, creating it and teaching it. Independent education theorist Etienne Wenger developed a concept of learning that is situated socially, casting off any assumption that learning is individual and distinct from other social activities (3). He added to this insight the concept of communities of practice: a group of people who engage with one another in a joint enterprise, negotiating meaning through a process of participation and reification, or the production of objects or mental artifacts that provide a focus for the negotiation of meaning (Wenger 51-85). Communities of practice are broadly conceived; the definition includes family structures, workplaces, classrooms, hobbies, even meetings of recovering addicts. Since one of the primary characteristics of a community of practice includes the negotiation of a joint enterprise (77-82), the idea is particularly well-suited for describing school and work environments.

Wenger provides three characteristics of a community of practice: (1) mutual engagement, (2) a joint enterprise, and (3) a shared repertoire, or resources for negotiating meaning, such as "routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions, or concepts" (82-3). These characteristics are but one facet of the entire

concept (Smith et al. 211-4), but can be used to describe “a set of criteria and expectations by which [communities of practice] recognize membership” (Wenger, qtd. in Smith et al. 211). The communities of practice for high school teachers and college instructors share these characteristics, which differ from one another in important ways. While the communities of practice that Wenger describes are mostly particular to a local context (the case study exemplified in the text follows the workplace community of claims processors at “Alinsu”, a pseudonym for a large American health insurance provider), they can also be applied with some modification to types of workplaces or institutions in general.

Workplaces and learning institutions - schools are both – are inherent sites of mutual engagement, and in a community of practice, mutual engagement is functional, “dense relations” built around “what they are there to do” (Wenger 74). Those job functions for a secondary or post-secondary teacher create the conditions for differing communities of practice. Participants in a community are influenced by the historical conditions that existed before they joined the community, and the community is likewise influenced by individual participants, creating new historical conditions and influences for future community members. As explained in the first section of the literature review (“History of the Cultural Divide”), “what they are there to do”, for high school teachers, involves working with students in higher volume, handling behavioral and developmental diversity, teaching content in a more prescribed manner, and combining the study of literature and writing. College English instructors, on the other hand, are more likely to have students who are there voluntarily as legal adults, working in an environment with reduced oversight, free to focus on composition or literature alone. Mutual engagement, focused around these differing attributes, develops in each group independently, creating

differences that are not perceived by participants unless they are brought to light by exposure to members of different communities of practice, through informed reflection or through collaboration.

Next, a community of practice coheres through the "negotiation of a joint enterprise" (Wenger 77), or a mutual understanding of purpose. Wenger refers to the development of a joint enterprise as "indigenous"; even though goals and practices are often set outside of the community, daily routines and procedures are negotiated among the members in response to these influences and one another and thus become their own (Wenger 79). This is relevant for describing the differences between high school and college English teacher communities because of the extent to which this process is imperceptible. Teachers working within colleges and high schools negotiate indigenous practices among themselves, and the actual behaviors and thoughts that proceed from this process of negotiation are only known by participants through actual work in a community, and thus cannot be known outside the community unless some intentional effort is made to show those behaviors and thoughts to an outsider.

Finally, a community of practice exhibits a shared repertoire, or resources for negotiating meaning, like "routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions, or concepts" (82-3). The tangible artifacts of a community of practice – for instance, teaching tools such as rubrics, syllabi, lesson plans, textbooks - are the simplest to explore and share among educators. However, there are other, less tangible examples of repertoire; in fact, it could be argued that many of the features of a discourse community (agreed goals, genres, lexis) are part of the repertoire of their respective communities of practice.

Again, as with discourse communities, there are subgroups within the communities described that differ significantly from what has been presented here, and there are considerable qualities that the communities share in common both as "workplace" and "learning environment". Also, there is an extent to which the use of the communities of practice concept to describe differences in academic culture mishandles the concept by considering it too narrowly. As Wenger opines, "[c]ommunities of practice should not be reduced to instrumental purposes. They are about knowing, but also about being together, living meaningfully, developing a satisfying identity, and altogether being human" (134). Wenger's vision is holistic, and the concept is instrumentalized here somewhat. However, the framework does provide a meaningful way to discuss social practices in an organized systematic manner, and it will remain the task of collaborating teachers to use those ideas to augment their professional lives to the fullest extent.

Student Writing Goals: College-Level Writing as Rhetorical Intentionality

> *"To make yourself clear without gesture, without facial expression, without intonation, without a real hearer, you have to foresee circumspectly all possible meanings a statement may have for* ***any possible reader in any possible situation****, and you have to make your language work so as to come clear all by itself, with no existential context. The need for this exquisite circumspection makes writing the agonizing work it commonly is" (102-3)*
> - Walter Ong, SJ, *Orality and Literacy*

It is important for teachers at different levels to understand one another; however, the relationship of influence between high school and college as it relates to writing goals is fraught and uneven. However, the fact remains that college-level writing – the domain of college English instructors – is the goal for both. Common Core State Standards for writing in high school, as in all content areas, aims for "college and career readiness" (Common Core, *Common Core*), the implication being that adequate preparation for college is adequate preparation for the

workplace, and vice versa. As a result, high school English teachers may be frustrated by a lack of first-hand experience of the expectations for which they are preparing their students, and college composition instructors may be led to complacency by their position as the gatekeeper to college-level writing: is college-level work simply whatever the college instructor says it is? A productive collaboration, then, will provide an opportunity for both sides to reflect on the nature of college-level writing through personal experience and published scholarship, so the high school teacher knows what to aim for and the college instructor has a goal worth fulfilling. Such a reflection is an important aspect of a collaborative plan that identifies communities of practice (Wenger) as a tool for understanding since the qualities of a community of practice include a joint enterprise built around "what they are there to do" (74). For writing teachers in high school and college, "do" includes teaching students how to write at a "college-worthy" level, and it is valuable to explore what that means both in the literature and as an exercise for collaborating teachers.

Unfortunately, the diverse contexts in which high school and college educators work create divergent emphases, so it appears to the student that there is no meaningful response to the question of college-level writing attributes. For instance, a particular definition of college-level writing may depend on:

- *Regional and socioeconomic cultural expectations*: The writing expected at the college level is intimately related to what a college education is expected to do; which varies based on location and culture. To provide one example, Patrick Sullivan, a professor at Manchester Community College in Connecticut, portrays a conversation between himself, Yufeng Zhang, an English professor in

Pennsylvania born and raised in China, and Fenglan Zheng, a composition instructor in China. They reflected on the differing expectations of college-level writing in their respective contexts and identified American writing as oriented toward critical thinking, self-discovery, integration of sources, and constructive critique. On the other hand, Chinese writing emphasizes the cultivation of positive emotions, moral stances, and aesthetic prowess (Sullivan, Zhang, et al.). There is no Platonic form corresponding to college-level writing; the definition is formed by the purposes to which writing in college are turned.

- *College mission*: Institutions have various missions; the particular qualities of expected student writing are influenced by these missions. At a public research university, disciplinary modes may be emphasized; at an open-enrollment community college, the refinement of the writing process is placed at the forefront; at certain private liberal arts colleges, more weight may be placed on critical thinking and rhetorical skill. These missions typically reflect the constitution of the student body that the college is called to serve; some students cannot or will not respond to certain approaches to college writing. As John Pekins observes, a student interested in a college education solely as a means to achieve financial goals will probably not willingly situate themselves in a liberal arts university tradition that predates the Middle Ages (234-5).
- *Instructor ideology*: Cultural traditions of academic freedom within post-secondary education mean that a particular instructor's ideologies can alter expectations for students even within a particular college or composition program. One instructor may emphasize the value of writing as a heuristic tool

(Kearns 345); another may conceive of writing as an induction into academic discourse (Bartholomae); yet another may exhibit a passion for the potential of writing to create awareness of social justice issues and produce transformation. Each of these principles will necessarily result in a different, purpose-built definition of college-level writing.

- *Vocational perspective*: The position of an individual (whether an instructor, student, administrator, or policymaker) in the educational system – their perspective – will impact perceptions of the purpose, qualities, and value of college-level writing. For example, a student may view their writing as a pleasure, as a solipsistic exercise in self-reflection (Kearns 347), or as a means to an end, accumulating points to get ahead in the game of life (Pekins 234). An instructor, on the other hand, may look at college-level writing as a learning opportunity, an assessment tool, or as a set of standards or outcomes (or, at grading time, a formidable burden!). Administrators may see college-level writing as a portion of a larger institutional goal, a target area for improvement, a theoretical abstraction, or, misguidedly, as an obstacle to retention goals. Additionally, community members outside of academia may have some vague notions of college-level writing based on their own memories of success or struggle or accounts from their college-age children.
- *Writing purpose*: There are as many purposes for writing as there are occasions to write, though writing tends to be lumped into genres (essays, letters, memoranda, personal narrative, poetry, prose) or modes of discourse (argumentation, description, exposition, narration). A different list of criteria

> will define "college-level" in any of these genres, modes, or occasions. For instance, brevity will characterize an effective piece of workplace writing, while the masterful use of literary devices is a core attribute of college-level creative writing. Susan Schorn's survey of perceptions of college-level writing from across the curriculum illustrates this principle; her respondents identified everything from content to style to the presence of argument as an indicator that student writing is at the expected level (330-4; 336-8).

Writing is astoundingly versatile and can function in any communicative situation with a writer and a reader. Clearly, the definition cannot rest upon what college-level writing *can* do. Rather, consider what it *must* do to be considered "college level". What is the fundamental quality most college-level writing shares, assuming a multiplicity of contexts, cultures, purposes, missions, and perspectives? The essential quality is the intentionally rhetorical nature of a text: it reflects an ability on the part of the author to effectively connect to an audience, to generate understanding of and sympathy toward a perspective, and to plausibly speak as a participant in a conversation rather than as a respondent to a prompt.

This understanding is reflected in the literature on the question, from outcomes statements to scholarly examinations of the question of college-level writing. For example, the *WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition*, promulgated by the Council of Writing Program Administrators and used as a basis for college writing program expectations nationwide, envisions an intentionally rhetorical text as a fulfillment of its mission. Of the four major aspects described in the statement, two of them ("Rhetorical Knowledge" and "Conventions") are explicitly tied to the rhetorical qualities of a text, and

the other two aspects ("Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing" and "Processes") are not particularly characteristic of college-level writing alone.

Other scholar-educators who have explored the question of college-level writing differ widely in their context-specific reconnaissance of the issue but tend to agree on the importance of deliberately applied rhetorical art. In 1989, Kathleen Black of the University of Northwestern (Saint Paul) studied the impact of audience awareness on persuasiveness in college student papers and found that the group of writers cued with information about their readers prior to writing composed more persuasive papers. When two researchers from San Diego State University – Barbara Moss and Suzanne Bordelon – set out to develop a senior-year class aimed at increasing college readiness in an ethnically diverse school in a large southwestern border city, they purposefully designed a rhetoric and writing course, since such a course would better prepare students for actual college-level writing. Finally, in their account of the Summer Writing Program at Carleton College in southwest Minnesota, Deborah Appleman and Douglas Green explored the "boundary" between high school and college writing; while they made no firm conclusions, they agreed that the qualities of good college writing include "control", which reflects the writer's ability to use writing as a communicative tool and not solely as a private forum for self-expression, and "revision", which is the modification of a text to meet the expectations and needs of readers, requiring an ability to understand those expectations and needs (194-6).

The essays in the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) collections *What Is "College-Level" Writing* (2006) and *What is "College-Level" Writing? Volume 2: Assignments, Readings, and Student Writing Samples* (2010) serve as a comprehensive record of this ongoing discussion, and those scholars – again, from diverse contexts – agree

that college-level writing is intentionally rhetorical, whatever else it may also be. The editors (Patrick Sullivan, Howard Tinberg, and, in the second volume, Sheridan Blau) built their collection around perspectives: high school teachers, college professors, students, and administrators. From the high school, Jeanette Jordan et al. deliberate briefly on the disciplinary shroud that keeps they and their colleagues from knowing what colleges expect of their students, but they are aware that college-level writing must anticipate "different writing tasks and audiences" (39). Merrill Davies notes that increasing emphasis has been placed on audience and voice in recent years, and college professors focus more on audience as a part of their evaluative mix (34). Additionally, while Milka Mustenikova Mosley associates college-level writing with exhibition of "ideas" and "individuality" (59), it could be argued that individuality is the additional ingredient needed to catch and retain the interest of the audience – a college-level writer should leave the reader with the impression that they have not read a mere exercise in writing skill. Among college professors, unsurprisingly, the rhetorical aspect of the definition gains greater definition. Lynn Bloom, author and English professor at the University of Connecticut, approaches the question with an extensive definition of "good enough" writing; that is, the sort of writing that would earn a "B" in a typical first-year composition course. To Bloom, however, excellent college-level writers participate in a conversation, moving beyond simply reporting upon someone else's conversation. Effective participation requires a rhetorical stance and sensitivity to how one is perceived. Muriel Harris, professor emerita from Purdue University, provides a perspective from the writing center, where she sees assignments from throughout the university, not composition courses alone. To her, college-level writing is reader-centric, demonstrating the "writer's ability to write effectively to his or her particular audience"

(123), and she refers to the distinction made by Linda Flower (in College English, 1979) between writer-based prose and reader-based prose, the latter being the more advanced approach. Finally, the administrators in the collection provide some unique insights regarding the attributes of college-level writing. James Gentile, a community college English department chair, uses Bloom's taxonomy as a lens through which to understand college-level writing, motivating the student to "move beyond the self" and "think in the context of others" (325). He also emphasizes academic literacy, a concept that assumes a community or audience. Chris Kearns, the Assistant Dean of Student Services at the University of Minnesota, underscores the recursive character of college writing. He critiques the three common approaches to writing that students bring with them from the high school: writing as a performance for the instructor, writing as an expression of individuality and sincerity that supersedes rhetorical effectiveness, and writing as a means to an end (346-8). To Kearns, all of these approaches are inadequate. What they are missing is a "dialogic consciousness" demanding awareness of "at least two consciousnesses: that of the writer and that of the implied reader" (348-9). College writing begins with a consciousness of the presence of others.

All three of these perspectives – high school teacher, college professor, and college administrator – appear to come together at the intentionally rhetorical nature of college-level writing, to various degrees[14]. For writing teachers at both levels who are working together to dismantle cultural barriers and align objectives, understanding the salient qualities of the kind of student writing toward which they are working is indispensable.

[14] The section on college-level writing is adapted from the author's prior work.

While collaborating teachers may settle on a definition of college-level writing that differs in nuance, it is important to have a theoretical base upon which they can situate themselves as teachers. The expressed understanding of teachers within the site of this study will be explored in Chapter 4; the survey and interview ask teachers to define college-level writing for themselves in preparation for the collaborative plan.

Professional Goals: Building on Strengths, Not Minimizing Differences

The ultimate goal of this collaborative plan is to generate positive change, but it is not the only effort seeking to create change. There are other reform efforts targeting the space between high school and college; for instance, these efforts include the P-16 movement in the United States, which seeks to create a more coherent educational system from preschool through college graduation, rather than the autonomous component-based system that exists today. With so many overlapping jurisdictions and regional expressions of culture, there is not a single way in which these endeavors have been implemented (Rochford). However, the underlying goal is to reduce division between levels of schooling, improving student articulation. One problem with this admirable goal, especially in such a diverse educational system, is finding out who gives in: which component part of the educational system has to surrender some important piece of what makes it valuable and distinctive? True, there are ways to express reform in ways that ease the concerns of stakeholders, but this is a rhetorical strategy – change still often means giving up in some areas and gaining in others. In the example of the P-16 movement, part of the controversy is built into the name; by calling the senior year of college "16th grade" (Davis and Hoffman 123), there is an implication that the college will be subsumed into the "grade" progression of the primary and secondary schools. On the other hand, many actual P-16 endeavors seek to align the

primary and secondary schools with the academic demands of colleges; efforts typically receiving the most attention are concerned with the transition between high school and college (Rochford). That such efforts receive the most consideration seems to support the perception that underlies the Twin Teachers plan: that there is a cultural difference between high schools and college that is more significant than the transition between other levels of schooling that demands special attention. It also brings to light a potential area of conflict between collaborating teachers that should be addressed.

In this plan, the goal is not to reduce differences between secondary and post-secondary schooling. The goal, rather, is to create mutual understanding – to demystify – and then to allow teachers the freedom to work out what that newfound comprehension means for their teaching and professional identity. High schools and colleges, in their current forms as they have developed in the United States, evolved to address particular needs and solve specific problems in time and place. In doing so, they are well-suited to their environment in important ways, but there are other changing circumstances that call for future evolution; examples include the inadequacy of test-directed learning in high schools as a learning strategy when most students are college-bound (Fanetti et al.) or the lack of alignment in graduate schools between the skills developed in a traditional Ph.D. program and the actual work that most college instructors do every day. This plan foresees that collaborating teachers, examining their respective cultural differences, would seek to understand how those assumptions and practices that divide them address (or fail to address) real-life exigencies in education and acquire a respect for the strengths and weaknesses of the status quo.

Chapter 3: Methodology

A Mixed Method Study

A mixed method approach has been selected for the portion of this project that supplements the insights from the literature review with data collected from a real-life local context, which combines qualitative and quantitative elements to create a fuller picture of a context than could be gathered with one approach alone. Interviews and surveys both have advantages and limitations. Interviews allow participants to report phenomena when it is impractical to observe them directly, but the data are particular to the individual participant and the information may be biased by the researcher's presence (Creswell 179). Furthermore, interviews are too time-consuming to conduct on a large scale (Miller, Linn, and Gronlund 319). Surveys, on the other hand, can be distributed more widely, but the depth of information is limited (Blakeslee and Fleischer 145-6). A combination of surveys and interviews, then, provides an opportunity to enhance the results of each while still achieving the objectives of qualitative research. The contents of the surveys and the aims of the interviews are described below in the section "Research Questions & Instruments".

While it is often the nature of qualitative and mixed-method research to provide results that are not readily generalizable, the situations that call for such an approach – discovery of potential variables, context exploration, the perceptions of individuals and small groups, generating a broad impression or understanding of a problem – often do not lend themselves to generalization anyway. Rather, the general applicability of this work has to do with patterning an approach, not providing a controlled, replicable investigation

into a hypothesis. As a result, there is a two-fold purpose. The purpose of these quantitative, non-experimental surveys and qualitative interviews for the construction of a collaborative plan is to determine the qualities and needs of a particular local context, but the purpose for other educators seeking to develop their own similar plan is to provide a model for investigating a context, the data here providing a basis for comparison between these results and the responses that a different context would yield.

The methods (survey and interview) described here in Chapter 3 are described as mixed method. However, it is important to note that the surveys in this study have basically qualitative *purposes*: the goal is to explore a set of attitudes in a relatively narrow context, building a basis for drawing certain limited conclusions about the participants in that context that can be supplemented with qualitative interviews. Furthermore, the student survey – in fact, more of a questionnaire – consists of open-ended questions to allow the construction of response categories following the administration of the survey, since it was not known ahead of time how the students would conceive of the differences between their high school and college experiences. Thus, it would seem inappropriate to describe the survey component as fully quantitative when the purposes are exploratory. A qualitative approach is preferred when variables are unknown, when the phenomenon in question may not be amenable to study by quantitative measures (as is often the case with human behavior; Seidman 2), or when meanings and experiences are under investigation (Creswell 98, 129; Seidman 3).

The mixed method strategy used is a *concurrent embedded* design as described by Creswell (210, 214-5). A concurrent approach means that the data are collected simultaneously, as opposed to a sequential design, where the data would be collected in

phases. Embedding reflects a hierarchal approach to understanding the data; one type of data takes precedence over another in an embedded approach. The alternative is a triangulation strategy, where the data are analyzed separately and compared, or a transformative strategy, where the data are viewed through an interpretive lens. With a concurrent embedded design, one method is given priority over another. In this case, the quantitative method (surveys) are used as the primary method, since it is the most generally applicable to the study sites, while the qualitative method (the interview) supplements the survey results, providing a broader perspective and a chance to expose the reasons behind the impressions collected (Creswell 214-5).

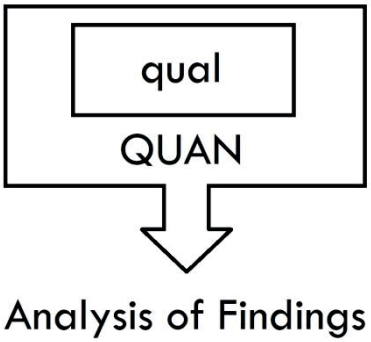

Figure A: Concurrent Embedded Design (adapted from Creswell)

Researcher's Role in the Study

As a mixed method study, the role of the researcher differs in the survey and interview portions. For the survey portion, an appropriate distance was held from the participants; the identity of the participants remained unknown to the researcher and care was taken to ensure there was no researcher impact on the responses. However, this distance is not possible or even desirable in qualitative interview research. The interviewer is a part of the negotiation of meaning with the participant, and there are influences that the interviewer can have upon the situation seemingly unrelated to the goals of the interview, such as off-putting tone or body language. Even the type of interview – spontaneous, informal, or formal – can influence the openness of the participant and the consistency of the results

between participants (Blakeslee and Fleischer 132-4). It is important, then, for the researcher to identify features of background to disclose potential biases and influences (Creswell 177). To satisfy this need, the researcher has provided a personal and professional profile (Appendix A) based on the demographic attributes described in Allan Johnson's *Privilege, Power, and Difference* (2006) and the curricular ideologies described by Michael Schiro in *Curriculum Theory: Conflicting Visions and Enduring Concerns* (2013).

Sampling Strategy

For the survey portion of the research, there was no sampling strategy; the sites were small enough to distribute the survey to every participant[15]. For the student surveys, an attempt was made to make the survey directly available to every student[16], and the instructor/teacher surveys were sent to every person who met the identified criteria (high school English teacher; instructor of ENG 111/112 at SCC and ENG 105/150 at MSU). However, for the interview portion, selection of participants was subject to the "backyard

[15] The original plan was to offer an incentive to initial survey participants, since incentives have been found to increase response rates in some other studies (Agarwal et al.; Goodman et al.; McCormack; Pieper et al.; Wilson et al.), though the effect was usually slight (i.e. present but statistically insignificant or "borderline" significant), and some of these studies used a non-cash incentive that was of value to the participant. However, the MSU IRB was concerned that the process used to give incentives to survey takers would require too much collection of personal data that could be matched with survey results. A similar problem did not exist with interview participants, since the identity of the subject was already known to the investigator, so approval was obtained to offer an incentive to interview participants.

[16] At SCC, it was possible to send the survey to every enrolled student. However, at MSU, technological limitations and the desire of the first-year composition coordinator to ensure that no one felt "strong-armed" (personal email, 29 October 2018) meant that the student survey was emailed to instructors who then had the option to pass it along to their students. It is not possible to determine how many instructors chose to forward the survey, and thus it is not possible to know exactly how many students had the opportunity to take it.

research" problem (Creswell 177; Glesne and Peshkin); there are pitfalls to studying one's own context (Seidman 31-4), and the researcher is affiliated with both college sites. In this case, concerns regarding the exercise of power are negligible; however, to avoid some of the problems involved with selectively choosing friends and acquaintances, a random selection process was employed initially using Microsoft Excel's "RAND" function, which produces a pseudo-random number between zero and one, and the resulting number was associated with a name. Then, the paired names and numbers were sorted in descending order. The top names were contacted for willingness to participate in an interview; when a participant declined, the next name on the list was selected. Ultimately, this approach did not generate enough willing participants in a timely manner, and the investigator modified the selection strategy, soliciting volunteers directly.

Forms of Data Collection; Rationale for Use

The surveys were constructed within an online survey development and management service (SurveyMonkey) and distributed via email. This method was chosen for ease of distribution, reduced barriers to completion for students and educators, and simplicity of data access and management. Student survey responses were entirely open-ended; the rationale is that the typical student does not have the specialized vocabulary to describe the differences between their high school and college experiences, and it would be better to allow the student to speak in their own voice and allow themes to emerge from the responses through analysis and interpretation. The teacher surveys were mostly closed-ended Likert-type responses with two additional open-ended items to allow the teachers to address the qualities of college-level writing and assess the types of activities perceived to

be helpful to address the lack of cultural knowledge between the levels of schooling. The rationale for these two open-ended questions is similar for the student surveys: the researcher does not know the vocabulary that the participants use to describe qualities of writing or all of the types of activities that schools use for professional development. Allowing the teachers to respond in their own words allows for the development of themes following the data collection period.

For the interviews, a "formal" approach with some "informal" features as defined by Blakeslee and Fleischer (133-4) was used to ensure consistency and provide a basis for comparison across participants. One limitation to this approach is a curtailing of flexibility; sticking to a script can limit the scope of information gathered from participants and runs the risk of limiting the outcomes of the conversation to the researcher's preconceived notions. However, the research protocol allowed the researcher to follow other lines of inquiry if necessary.

Procedures for Recording Information

Survey data, as mentioned, was recorded through the SurveyMonkey service and raw data was downloaded into Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. The interviews were recorded on an electronic recording device or a Zultys MXIE telephone system with a smartphone-based recording app (Apple Voice Memos) used as a backup in case of an electronic recording device failure. Notes were taken during the interviews to direct the researcher to particularly interesting statements and observations, and interviews were then transcribed.

Data Handling and Analysis

SURVEYS

Since the student surveys were based on open-ended short narrative responses, an emergent coding approach was used to identifying trends following data collection. Survey results were coded based on similar answers, then ranked in total and by course for each question. Since it was possible for a student to provide more than one response to a particular question - in fact, one question requested multiple responses – the "responses per respondent" ratio was determined to show that the trends identified were not overwhelmed by a few students providing a large number of responses to a question.

The instructor surveys were simpler to code, since they primarily consisted of Likert-type responses in predetermined areas of inquiry: expectations of college-level writing and student preparation, types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions, pedagogical strategies, standards and objectives, institutional support for collaborative activities, and beliefs regarding the benefit of increased cultural awareness of the other. As with all Likert-type scale data, analysis problems arise due to question interpretation. What "agree" or "strongly agree" means to one participant may differ from another; furthermore, a term like "agree" is not divisible. One cannot

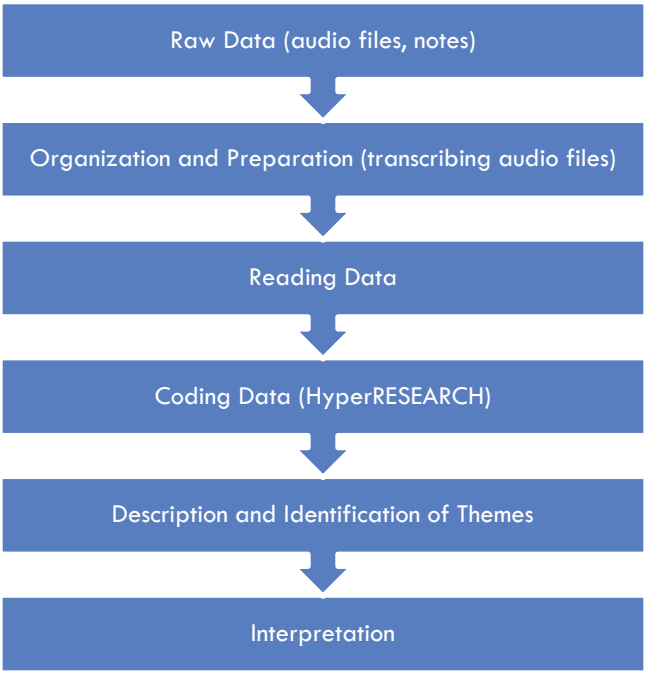

Figure B: Interview Data Analysis Steps (adapted from Creswell 185)

provide ½ an “agree” or 1¼ of a “disagree”, and the intervals between the responses are not necessarily comparable for all respondents. Even though Likert-type scales create controversial analysis issues, they have value in measuring perceptions that are unquantifiable. To that end, the Likert-type responses were combined for all high school teachers and college instructors, and a weighted average (Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Agree = 3; Strongly Agree = 4) was calculated for each question, allowing at least a superficial comparison, keeping in mind the absence of discreteness in individual responses and the inherent inconsistency of intervals between responses. Apart from the Likert-type responses, there were two short narrative responses on the qualities of college-level writing and the participant impressions regarding the types of activities that would increase awareness. These were coded in a similar manner to the student surveys, though the lower numbers of responses mean that the results are simply described in a narrative.

Enrollment information was collected from the institutions on student enrollment in each course and a count of each survey sent for the instructor survey portion was maintained to allow the calculation of a response rate

Interviews

For the interviews, the raw data took the form of digital audio recordings and handwritten interview notes. Raw data were prepared by transcription. For the reading stage, notes were made regarding general themes, and an initial summary was written for each interview. Following the identification of general themes, topics were clustered into codes and labeled using HyperRESEARCH, a qualitative research analysis tool. The codes were not predetermined but rather emerged from the responses. The codes were then used to create a description of the participant and their situation through a narrative, which was

interpreted through the lens of the survey results and the work in the literature review dealing with discourse communities, communities of practice, and college-level writing attributes (Creswell 183-90). In the write-up for the description and interpretation, some details from the interview that were not germane to the topic under discussion (e.g. the participant's gender, location, name, employment details, etc.) were changed with the intention of concealing personally identifiable information.

Validity Strategy

The validity strategy for the survey questions primarily consists of ensuring that the questions were designed to be appropriate for the purpose and the audience. Adapting Miller, Linn, and Gronlund's good practices for developing short answer items, the open-ended questions were written to be brief, specific, and direct (174-5), and the language used was appropriate to the audience. The Likert-type scale in the teacher surveys serves as an inventory measuring attitudes toward students, understanding of the writing assignments, reading assignments, working conditions, and pedagogical strategies experienced on the other side of the cultural divide, and their beliefs regarding opportunities for professional development, the value of additional opportunities to gain awareness of conditions experienced by their colleagues, the definition of college-level writing, and the types of activities which would be valuable in increasing lacking awareness. The "undecided" or "neutral" option typically found in a Likert-type scale has been excluded from this instrument, forcing the participant to provide at least a tentatively negative or positive response (Miller, Linn, and Gronlund 321).

The validity strategy for the interviews involves member checking, or allowing the participants to review and recommend changes to their contribution to the write-up,

clarification of biases (see the researcher's personal and professional profile in Appendix A for a presentative of the factors that could bias the interpretation), and presentation of negative or discrepant information that complicates the themes developed in the interviews (Creswell 191-2).

Research Approval

This research protocol was approved by Murray State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), Shawnee Community College's Director of Institutional Research, and authorized administrators at all of the participating high schools. The principal investigator completed the ethics training required by the IRB for the type of research under consideration. Informed consent was obtained from all participants according to the protocol in the approved IRB application.

Research Questions and Instruments

While the project, in general, is motivated by the question of how an intentional, one-on-one collaborative program can help high school teachers and college instructors understand the objectives and cultural values of their respective domains for the purpose of enhancing student preparedness and improving student outcomes, it is recognized that addressing such a broad question comes in stages. The more specific research questions, then, include:

- What are the significant differences in professional culture between high school and college English teachers that impact the student and teacher experience?

- Are educators aware of the significant differences in professional culture between high school and college English teachers?
- Do high school and college English teachers align with one another on the qualities of college-level writing?
- How do students perceive the difference in classroom practices as they transition from high school to college?
- Would an intentional, one-on-one collaborative program leading to greater awareness help high school teachers and college instructors improve their teaching?

Some of these questions are partially addressed in the literature review, but questions pertaining to perception and awareness of particular educators (at least for the sites chosen for this project) are effectively addressed by the mixed methods approach represented by the survey and interview instruments described below.

Instruments

College Instructor Survey

The survey administered to instructors of first-year composition at Shawnee Community College and Murray State University measured attitudes toward students, understanding of the writing assignments, reading assignments, working conditions, and pedagogical strategies experienced by high school teachers, and their beliefs regarding opportunities for professional development, the value of additional opportunities to gain awareness of conditions experienced by their colleagues, the definition of college-level writing, and the types of activities which would be valuable in increasing lacking awareness. The questions were:

Describe the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements: [Likert-type scale; 4 points]

- *My students understand the expectations of college-level writing. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *My students are prepared to write at an appropriate level for first-year college composition. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am aware of the types of writing assignments assigned in high school English classes. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am aware of the types of reading assignments assigned in high school English classes. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am aware of the learning conditions of high school students taking high school English classes. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am aware of the working conditions for high school English teachers in my area. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am aware of the common pedagogical strategies used by high school English teachers. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am familiar with the standards and objectives that high school English teachers are required to meet. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I have informal opportunities to collaborate with high school English teachers. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I have formally organized opportunities to collaborate with high school English teachers. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *My institution provides support for professional development. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I believe greater awareness of conditions in high school English (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives) would help me improve my teaching. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*

Questions [short narrative answers]:

- *In one sentence, describe the fundamental qualities of college-level writing.*
- *What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in high school English (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)?*

High School Teacher Survey

The survey administered to high school English teachers also measured attitudes toward students, understanding of the writing assignments, reading assignments, working conditions, and pedagogical strategies experienced by college English instructors, and their beliefs regarding opportunities for professional development, the value of additional opportunities to gain awareness of conditions experienced by their colleagues,

the definition of college-level writing, and the types of activities which would be valuable in increasing lacking awareness. They were intended to mirror the questions asked of the college instructors. The questions were:

Describe the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements: [Likert-type scale; 4 points]

- *My students understand the expectations of college-level writing. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *My students are prepared to write at an appropriate level for first-year college composition. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am aware of the types of writing assignments assigned in college English composition classes. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am aware of the types of reading assignments assigned in college English composition classes. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am aware of the learning conditions of high school students taking college English composition classes. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am aware of the working conditions for college-level English instructors in my area. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am aware of the common pedagogical strategies used by college-level English instructors. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I am familiar with the standards and objectives that college-level English instructors are required to meet. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I have informal opportunities to collaborate with college-level English instructors. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I have formally organized opportunities to collaborate with college-level English instructors. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *My institution provides support for professional development. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*
- *I believe greater awareness of conditions in college English composition (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives) would help me improve my teaching. [Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]*

Questions [short narrative answers]:

- *In one sentence, describe the fundamental qualities of college-level writing.*
- *What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in college English composition (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)?*

Student Survey

The student survey was not given predetermined responses since students typically do not have the vocabulary to describe pedagogical differences in disciplinary terms. The

short answer response allowed for coding of similar answers based on the interpretation of the researcher:

- *1. Identify your high school: [name, city, state]*
- *2. Describe the two most significant challenges you have personally experienced in your college composition classes. [short narrative answer]*
- *3. What are some ways that your high school teachers successfully prepared you to meet those challenges? [short narrative answer]*
- *4. Next, what are some ways that your high school teachers could have better prepared you to meet those challenges? [short narrative answer]*
- *5. Describe the ways in which your English class writing assignments are different, comparing high school to college. [short narrative answer]*

Interviews

The interview protocol is included in Appendix B; the purpose is to explore the topics in the survey in greater depth. The interview for each participant is similar to allow the comparison of answers between participants.

Setting and Participants

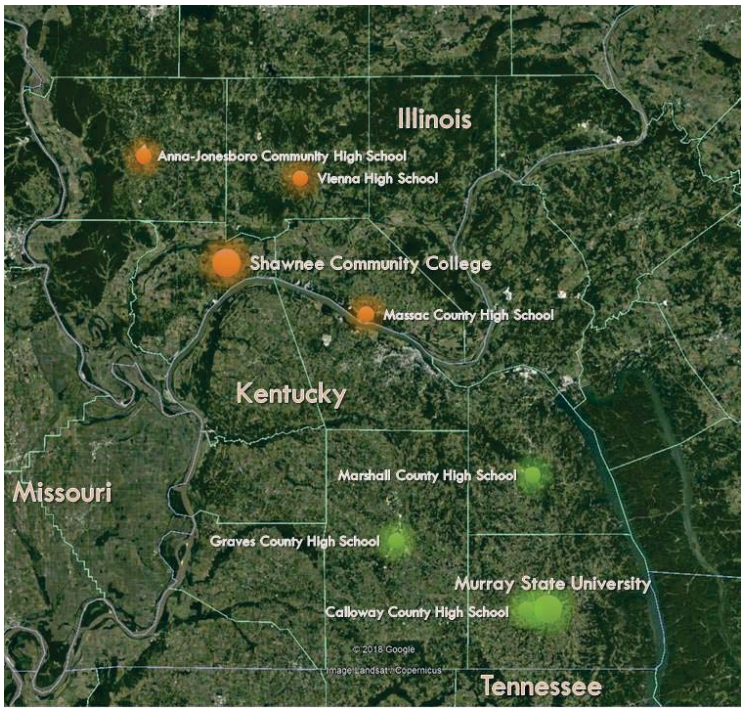

Figure C – Study Sites Map

Two institutions[17] in the Ohio River Valley region were chosen as the college sites for this study: Shawnee Community College (SCC) in Ullin, Illinois[18] and Murray State University (MSU) in Murray, Kentucky[19]. SCC is an open enrollment community college that serves a rural district in southernmost Illinois. As of fall 2015, there were 801 full-time students and 1,018 part-time students (Illinois Board). The school's enrollment is racially mixed given the predominantly Caucasian demographic makeup of the region (2015 enrollment: 80.5% white, 14.4% black, 2.7% other, and 2.4% declaring Hispanic ethnicity), but this masks the segregation of the district: most of the African American population lives in the southern tip of the district, in Alexander and Pulaski counties. MSU, on the other hand, is a moderately selective public university in western Kentucky; it also serves a rural area but draws students from a wider region, including Louisville, Nashville, and Saint Louis. The

[17] More data on these two colleges from the US Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics are found in Appendix C.

[18] Additional campuses at Anna, Cairo, and Metropolis; an extension center at Vienna opened on 17 January 2019.

[19] Additional campuses at Fort Campbell, Henderson, Hopkinsville, Madisonville and Paducah.

university enrolled 10,998 students as of 2015; there were 8,850 calculated by full-time equivalency, 11.5% representing graduate student enrollment (Kentucky Council, *Kentucky Fall Enrollment*; Kentucky Council, *Full-Time Equivalent*). These colleges were selected both for their proximity and familiarity to the author and because they exemplify smaller, student-centered institutions that would benefit from incremental improvements that would not require the mobilization of extensive financial or administrative resources. While these schools are located in different states (Illinois and Kentucky), with main campuses roughly sixty miles from one another, they exist in similar demographic and socioeconomic contexts. As rural institutions that primarily serve a local population, these schools (and others like them) often have a more difficult time orchestrating money and expertise than an urban or flagship state institution with a deep well of donors and political muscle. Educators at these schools often make improvements with fewer resources, and thus they are an ideal site to explore low-cost individual instructor collaborations targeted toward incremental improvement. Additionally, they provide two types of institutions (community college and state university) from which to make comparisons.

The two colleges have different approaches to their basic English composition requirement. SCC has a two-semester program consisting of six credit hours in two courses: ENG 111, which emphasizes basic writing skills and critical thinking, and ENG 112, which emphasizes research writing skills and creating logical arguments supported with research (Shawnee 109). MSU, on the other hand, has a one semester, four credit hour requirement. ENG 105 emphasizes close reading, research, critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, and argument in the context of academic writing (Murray 322-3). The university has an honors program; ENG 150 may be taken in lieu of ENG 105 as an honors selection. The honors

course highlights rhetorical approaches and includes oral presentation (Murray 322-3). The program details at each institution could have an effect on the challenges that the students face. For instance, the accelerated four credit hour workload at MSU could intensify the difficulty; conversely, the lower writing skills preparation at an open admissions college like SCC could result in higher barriers to success.

The English curricula at the selected high schools are conventional for American high schools: literature oriented, with a focus on American literature during the junior year and British literature during the senior year. Illinois and Kentucky both use the Common Core State Standards.

The high schools were chosen based on their contribution to the student body of each of these colleges; they represent the top three high schools from which new students enrolled at MSU[20] and SCC in the fall of 2017 and 2018. The rationale is that high schools which send a large number of students to a particular college would benefit most from a deepened relationship with that college. The high schools selected are the following:

- **Associated with MSU**
    - **Calloway County High School** (CCHS), Murray, Kentucky

      Enrollment: 863

      Demographics: 51.6% male; 48.4% female; 90% white; 1.3% black; 4.1% Hispanic; 4.6% other

[20] Graves County High School is actually the fourth largest contributor of students to Murray State University; however, the administrators at one of the top three high schools failed to respond to the request for formal permission to conduct surveys and interviews after an initial willingness to participate.

Economic conditions: 51.4% of students receive free or reduced lunch[21]

Enrollment in college: 68.3% of students enrolled in college (full and part time) or vocational training after graduating

(Kentucky Department of Education, *School Report Card: Calloway County High School*)

- **Graves County High School** (GCHS), Mayfield, Kentucky

  Enrollment: 1,250

  Demographics: 49.8% male; 50.2% female; 89.0% white; 1.6% black; 5.4% Hispanic; 4.0% other

  Economic conditions: 52.3% of students receive free or reduced lunch

  Enrollment in college: 67.5% of students enrolled in college (full and part time) or vocational training after graduating

  (Kentucky Department of Education, *School Report Card: Graves County High School*)

- **Marshall County High School** (MCHS), Benton, Kentucky

Enrollment: 1,374

Demographics: 52.1% male; 47.9% female; 97.5% white; 1.5% Hispanic; 1.0% other

Economic conditions: 46.0% of students receive free or reduced lunch

[21] Eligibility for free or reduced lunch is tied to a multiple of household Federal income poverty guidelines; therefore, in general, a higher rate corresponds to higher poverty levels in the district.

Enrollment in college: 75.4% of students enrolled in college (full and part time) or vocational training after graduating

(Kentucky Department of Education, *School Report Card: Marshall County High School*)

- **Associated with SCC**
    - **Anna-Jonesboro Community High School** (AJCHS), Anna, Illinois

Enrollment: 510

Demographics: 93.9% white; 1.6% black; 2.0% Hispanic; 2.5% other

Economic conditions: 44.5% of students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches, live in substitute care, or live in families who receive public aid

Enrollment in college: 75.0% of students enroll in a 2 or 4 year college within 16 months of graduating

(Illinois State Board of Education, *Illinois At-a-Glance Report Card: Anna-Jonesboro High School*)

- **Massac County High School** (MCHS), Metropolis, Illinois

Enrollment: 584

Demographics: 85.4% white; 5.7% black; 1.7% Hispanic; 7.2% other

Economic conditions: 50.5% of students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches, live in substitute care, or live in families who receive public aid

Enrollment in college: 80.0% of students enroll in a 2 or 4 year college within 16 months of graduating

(Illinois State Board of Education, *Illinois At-a-Glance Report Card: Massac County High School*)

- **Vienna High School** (VHS), Vienna, Illinois

  Enrollment: 380

  Demographics: 95.0% white; 1.3% Hispanic; 1.6 Asian; 2.1% other

  Economic conditions: 45.8% of students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches, live in substitute care, or live in families who receive public aid

  Enrollment in college: 86.0% of students enroll in a 2 or 4 year college within 16 months of graduating

  (Illinois State Board of Education, *Illinois At-a-Glance Report Card: Vienna High School*)

Demographic information is undetermined for the teachers at these high schools or colleges; there are so few teachers that one teacher could skew the numbers at a particular school. For college student surveys, since English composition is a required class with a broad enrollment profile, it is reasonable to assume that the demographic composition of students reflects that of the school.

Conclusion

Of the options for getting a sense of the conditions at a given site, the mixed method approach of surveys and interviews probably provides the broadest and most useful information. The use of surveys alone would be limited in nuance, given the lack of

significant engagement on the part of participants; most participants spend less than five minutes considering and answering questions. The use of interviews alone would be manageable if a collaborator were investigating only one site and could interview most of the teachers at a particular school; however, when investigating a region, interviews are too time-consuming. Additionally, the strategy whereby the quantitative approach (surveys) is given precedence, supplemented by the qualitative approach (interviews) ensures that the broadest information is used to draw general conclusions about the research sites; then the superficiality of the survey data can be deepened by the interviews. In general, it is preferable to have more information rather than less, especially when a pragmatic data collection strategy is contemplated. The intent is that these methods, as described, provide a thorough but flexible framework for collection the best data possible at the sites to inform the development of a plan that is built around the needs of teachers and students in this particular setting.

Chapter 4: Research Findings

Introduction

This section on findings is intended to give a broad overview of the survey and interview results in an easily digestible form. As mentioned, the site study portion of this project uses mixed methods combining non-experimental quantitative data and qualitative interview data. In the first section, the data are presented in that order: the survey results (college instructor, high school teacher, and student) are represented first, followed by interview narratives that were written after the transcripts were coded. The interview results were validated by member checking, or allowing the participants to review and recommend changes to the interpreted narrative, and all four interview participants felt that the rendering was fair and provided adequate protection for their personal identities. In the second section, following the data presentation, the analysis is shaped by the research questions listed in Chapter 3. These research questions provide a place for the survey and interview results to be combined into a shared set of insights, which can then be used to better understand the cultural differences between educators at the two sites and supplement the collaborative plan.

Survey Results

◆ Response Rate: College Instructor Surveys ◆			
School	**Instructors**	**Respondents**	**Rate**
MSU	24	*7*	29.16%
SCC	9	3	33.33%
Total	**33**	**10**	**30.30%**

◆ Response Rate: High School Teacher Surveys ◆			
School	**Instructors**	**Respondents**	**Rate**
MSU Area	26	8	30.77%
SCC Area	14	10	71.43%
Total	**40**	**18**	**45.00%**

◆ Response Rate: Student Surveys ◆			
School/Course	**Students**	**Respondents**	**Rate**
ENG 111 (SCC)	161 [22] [23]	21	13.04%
ENG 112 (SCC)	59 [24] [25]	*7*	11.86%
Shawnee CC	*220*	*28*	*12.73%*
ENG 105 (MSU)	*735* [25]	25	3.40%
ENG 150 (MSU)	69 [25]	9	13.04%
Murray State U	*804*	*34*	*4.23%*
Total	**1,024**	**62**	**6.05%**

Figure D - Survey Respondent Counts and Response Rates

The surveys administered in this study were designed for different purposes; for the educators, the goal was to explore the value of a collaborative effort among teachers and to assess prior awareness of the differences in professional culture, and for the students, the purpose was to assess awareness of cultural differences, particularly in light of the ways in which those differences might cause them to struggle through a transitory life stage. In general, teachers, as trained professionals, have the language needed to express themselves in their area of expertise, while students, as novices with inconsistent levels of understanding, may not. As a result, the strategy for each was different. For the teachers, a Likert-type scale was used to explore pre-defined areas of inquiry like expectations of college-level writing, student preparation, writing assignments, reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions, pedagogical

[22] An unknown share of these numbers consist of dual-credit high school students under the age of 18 who were specifically asked not to respond to the survey, since the research approval was for adult students only.

[23] These numbers reflect enrollment in each course, not attendance, and may include students who are not actively pursuing course completion. However, their impressions are equally valid for the purposes of this survey, since the challenges encountered in the course may have been a contributing factor to their inability to complete the course.

strategies, standards and objectives, institutional support for collaborative activities, and beliefs regarding the benefit of increased cultural awareness of the other[24]. There were two open-ended short answer questions to capture nuances of opinion regarding the qualities of college-level writing and professional development experiences. Survey results from both sides of the secondary/post-secondary divide are compared to see if there are any revealing differences. The student surveys were entirely open-ended short

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[24] The survey questions are provided in Chapter 3 and in Footnotes 29 and 31 below, and they are listed here for quick reference. Student questions are listed below in Footnote 32. Questions requiring a short narrative answer are in bold.

1. My students understand the expectations of college-level writing.
2. My students are prepared to write at an appropriate level for first-year college composition.
3. I am aware of the types of writing assignments assigned in [high school English/college English composition] classes.
4. I am aware of the types of reading assignments assigned in [high school English/college English composition] classes.
5. I am aware of the learning conditions of students taking [high school English/college English composition] classes.
6. I am aware of the working conditions for [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors] in my area.
7. I am aware of the common pedagogical strategies used by [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors].
8. I am familiar with the standards and objectives that [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors] are required to meet.
9. I have informal opportunities to collaborate with [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors].
10. I have formally organized opportunities to collaborate with [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors].
11. My institution provides support for professional development.
12. I believe greater awareness of conditions in [high school English/college English instructors] (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives would help me improve my teaching.
13. **In one sentence, describe the fundamental qualities of college-level writing.**
14. **What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in [high school English/college English] (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)?**

narrative responses allowing themes to emerge during analysis, often requiring judgments from the investigator to place novice responses into formal categories. This section relates the analysis of the survey questions, which is supplemented below with interview results, according to the concurrent embedded design approach described in Chapter 3.

While the results of both the college instructor surveys and the high school teacher surveys are described in detail below, it is valuable to provide an overview by comparing the combined Likert-scale responses for all high school teachers and college instructors. First, the results are presented on a diverging bar chart by percentage so responses can be easily compared between high school teachers and college instructors. To provide a second strategy, a weighted average (assuming Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, and Strongly Agree = 4) was calculated for each question; however, it is important to keep in mind that Likert-scale responses are indiscrete – descriptive terms like "agree" are not subject to arithmetic – and have inconsistent intervals between responses for each individual respondent. Since the most heavily weighted response (Strongly Agree) is worth 4 and the most lightly weighted response (Strongly Disagree) is worth 1, the graph begins at 1 and has a midpoint of 2.5; that is, a neutral response falling between "disagree" and "agree" would be 2.5[25].

[25] Note: the "undecided" or "neutral" option typically found in a Likert-type scale has been excluded from this instrument, forcing the participant to provide a negative or positive response. This question design choice means that there is probably a greater tendency in the results toward a positive or negative response than there would have been if the questions had provided a neutral choice. The neutral option is left out because the value of recording a "lean" one way or the other,

In general, it appears that responses from high school teachers tend to be more positive than college instructors in all categories with the exception of awareness of working conditions (roughly equal), familiarity with standards and objectives (college instructors are more confident regarding their knowledge of high school standards than vice-versa), and belief in pedagogical value of greater awareness (both types of educators felt positively, but college instructors were more positive). The tendency of responses regarding awareness of the other side of the divide in terms of writing assignments, reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions, pedagogical strategies, or standards and objectives was neutral to positive, and the tendency of responses regarding the availability of opportunities to collaborate was negative. High school teacher respondents were more likely to believe that they had support for professional development. The most significant disagreement between the two types of educators was in the area of student preparedness. High school teachers leaned neutral-positive on the question of student understanding of the expectations of college-level writing and student preparation for first-year composition, while college instructors – the actual teachers of first-year composition – leaned in a negative direction. A more detailed analysis of each group of survey results, including the short narrative answers, follows below.

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no matter how slight, is greater than providing a more accurate midpoint, which a neutral option could provide.

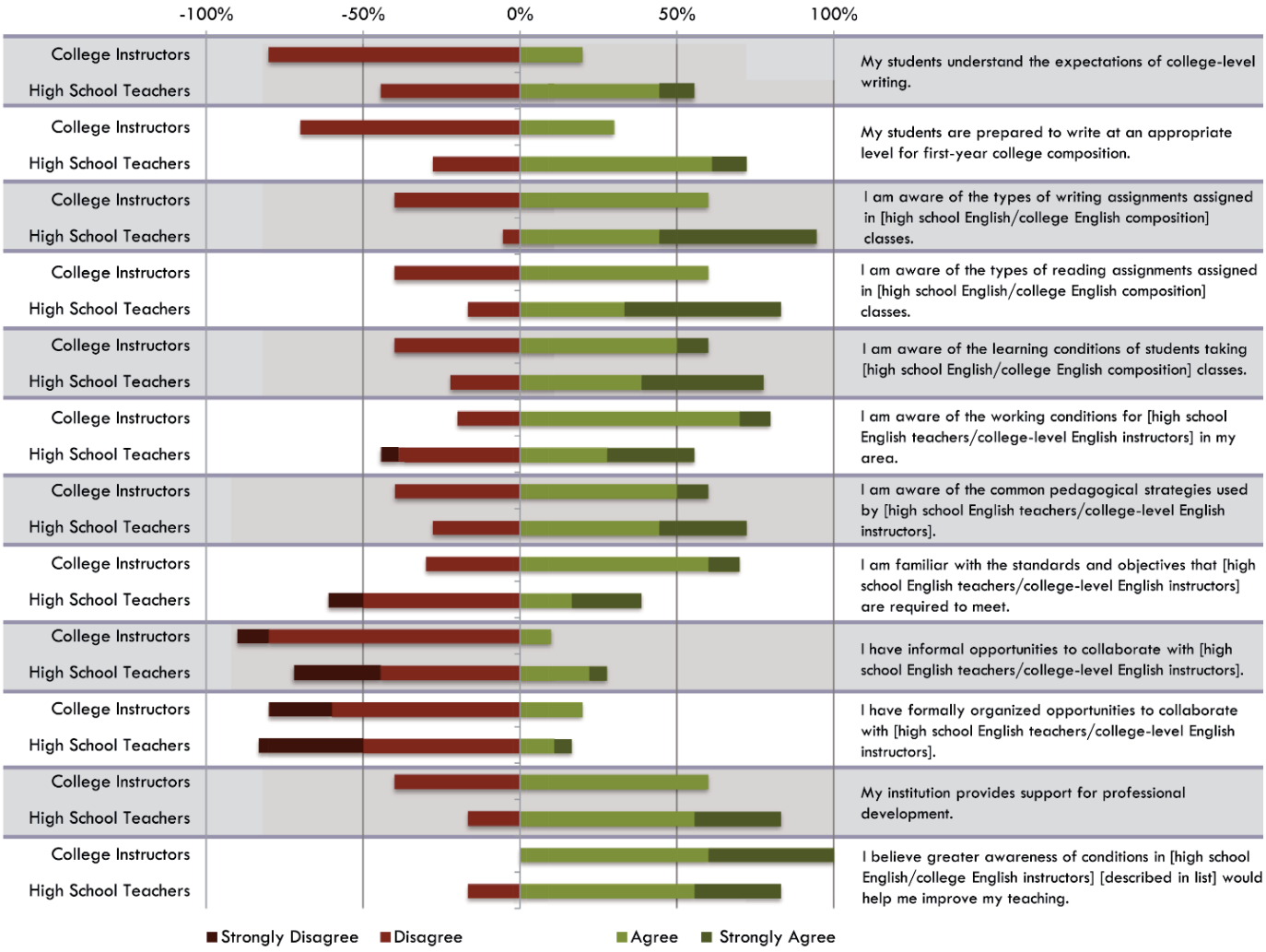

Figure E - Diverging Bar Chart of Likert-Type Scale Results for Educator Surveys, By Percentage *(presentation strategy recommended by Heiberger and Robbins)*

	HS	Coll
Q1. My students understand the expectations of college-level writing.	2.67	2.20
Q2. My students are prepared to write at an appropriate level for first-year college composition.	2.83	2.30
Q3. I am aware of the types of writing assignments assigned in [high school English/college English composition] classes.	3.44	2.60
Q4. I am aware of the types of reading assignments assigned in [high school English/college English composition] classes.	3.33	2.60
Q5. I am aware of the learning conditions of students taking [high school English/college English composition] classes.	3.17	2.70
Q6. I am aware of the working conditions for [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors] in my area.	2.78	2.90
Q7. I am aware of the common pedagogical strategies used by [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors].	3.00	2.70
Q8. I am familiar with the standards and objectives that [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors] are required to meet.	2.50	2.80
Q9. I have informal opportunities to collaborate with [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors].	2.06	2.00
Q10. I have formally organized opportunities to collaborate with [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors].	1.89	2.00
Q11. My institution provides support for professional development.	3.11	2.60
Q12. I believe greater awareness of conditions in [high school English/college English] [*described in list*] would help me improve my teaching.	3.11	3.40

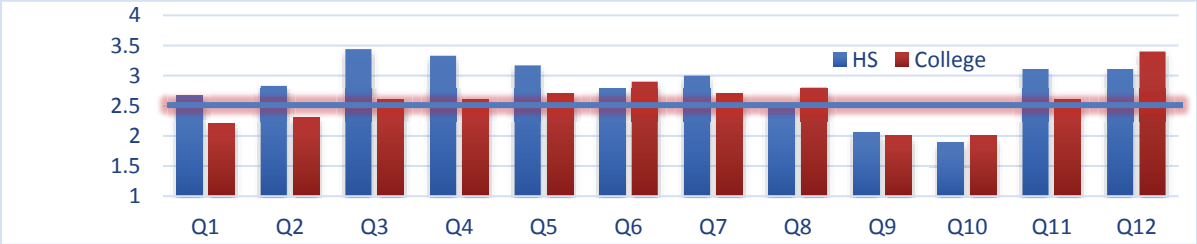

Figure F - Weighted Average of Likert-Type Scale Results for Educator Surveys *(Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Agree = 3; Strongly Agree = 4)*

College Instructor Surveys

From the thirty-three college instructors to whom the survey was sent, ten responses were gathered, for a response rate of 30.30%. The results on the Likert scale portion indicate that instructors tend to disagree that their students understand the expectations of college-level writing and are not prepared for first-year composition. Regarding the level of college instructor knowledge of high school classrooms (writing assignments, reading assignments, learning conditions, pedagogical strategies, standards and objectives), results were split with a lean toward awareness. The primary exception was for working conditions for high school teachers; a strong majority of college instructors felt they were familiar with high school teacher working conditions. Respondents, as a whole, felt that their opportunities to collaborate with high school teachers were limited, though a majority agreed that their institutions provide support for professional development. Most importantly, all respondents believed that greater awareness of conditions in high school English classrooms would help them improve their teaching.

For the short narrative response questions[26], eight instructors provided a substantially complete response; most of the responses reflect serious prior reflection on

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[26] Short narrative response questions:

- In one sentence, describe the fundamental qualities of college-level writing.
- What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in high school English (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)?

Note: while the purpose of this question was to determine what kinds of activities would help increase awareness of conditions without leading respondents toward "collaboration" as an answer, the IRB-required consent form did briefly describe the purpose of the project. As a result, it is possible that the idea of "collaboration" was suggested to respondents by reading the consent form, and thus they may have been more likely to consider it than otherwise. The relevant language from the consent form was as follows: "*The purpose of this research is to provide exploratory data for the development of a one-on-one collaborative project to help high school English teachers and college*

the topics under deliberation. First, the college instructors appear to have a diverse and well-informed set of opinions on the fundamental qualities of college-level writing. While none of the respondents settle decisively upon rhetorical intentionality alone as described in Chapter 2, audience considerations are explicitly specified in half of the responses; in the remaining responses, consideration of audience would be implied: the "ability to express one's carefully-thought-out ideas clearly and correctly" and "a complex, original, and well-organized argument". Other identified features include focus, concision, development, originality, significance, complexity, critical thinking, research focus, a multiplicity of sources, close reading, and awareness of disciplinary concerns. Next, when asked what kinds of activities would help increase awareness of conditions in high school classrooms, workshops or meetings including both high school teachers and college instructors were proposed by four of the eight respondents; other ideas included a portfolio with a checklist of objectives, a more detailed understanding of "writing assignments, pedagogical strategies, and teacher's assessment of writing", and writing samples.

Completion of Surveys by College

The Murray State University (MSU) instructor survey was sent to twenty-four instructors of first-year composition, of either ENG 105, which fulfills MSU's composition requirement, or the corresponding honors course ENG 150. Of these, fourteen were full-time, tenured/tenure-track professors, and ten were lecturers, graduate students, or other contingent faculty. Seven surveys were completed (six by full-time faculty and one by a

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composition instructors increase their understanding of the professional culture, pedagogy, workplace pressures, values, and other differences between each academic level; ultimately, then, the purpose is to improve student performance and resilience by providing another avenue for professional development for their instructors".

part-time faculty member) for a response rate of 29.16%. The Shawnee Community College (SCC) instructor survey was sent to nine instructors of first-year composition (either ENG 111 or ENG 112, the required composition sequence); of these, three were full-time instructors, and six were contingent faculty or high school teachers teaching dual credit courses[27]. Three surveys were completed (one by full-time faculty and two by contingent/dual-credit faculty) for a response rate of 33.33%. Complete responses are found in Appendix D.

High School Teacher Surveys

Forty high school teachers received the survey; eighteen responded, producing a response rate of 45.00%. The Likert scale question results show that, in contrast to college instructors, high school teachers are more sanguine about their perceptions of student preparedness. A majority of teachers believe their students understand the expectations of college-level writing, and a strong majority believe their students are prepared to write in college-level composition classes. There was a similar agreement regarding the characteristics of the college composition classroom (writing assignments, reading assignments, learning conditions, pedagogical strategies, standards and objectives); Teachers appear confident in their awareness with the exception of standards and objectives, where there was a slight lean toward disagreement. As with college instructors, high school teachers felt that their opportunities to collaborate with their college

[27] Dual credit instructors who would be receiving both surveys were instructed to properly complete the survey as follows: "*Note: if you are a dual credit instructor, you should answer the questions from your perspective as [an SCC instructor/a high school teacher]. Some of you will be receiving a similar survey from me addressed to [high school teachers/college instructors] and those questions should be answered from your perspective as [an English composition instructor at SCC/an employee of your high school*]".

counterparts were limited, and a majority agreed that their institutions provide support for professional development. Most respondents believed that greater awareness of conditions in high school English classrooms would help them improve their teaching, but it was not unanimous like it was with college instructors. Three respondents believed that greater awareness would not help, as opposed to fifteen respondents who saw the value of awareness. It is meaningful to add that, while many of the high school teachers have some college teaching experience (because of dual credit teaching or serving as an adjunct instructor), few of the college instructors have high school teaching experience.

For the short narrative response questions[28], sixteen teachers provided a substantially complete response, and the answers were comprehensive and reflective. In strong contrast to the college instructors, not a single high school teacher respondent identified "audience" as a primary consideration in college-level writing, though two separate participants noted that "analyzing the rhetorical techniques of a source" and "voice" was important. Notably, four of the sixteen responses were written in the form of a learning objective (with which high school teachers are more familiar): "Students writing at the college level should be...", "Students should be able to...", and so on. Important features identified include focus, concision, formality, thoughtfulness, purpose, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary, avoidance of plagiarism, adherence to a writing prompt, and appropriate exhibition of student abilities. Regarding the kinds of activities that would help increase awareness of

[28] Short narrative response questions:
- In one sentence, describe the fundamental qualities of college-level writing.
- What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in college English (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, college standards/objectives)?

conditions in college composition classrooms, recommendations relating to collaboration included “a best practices session with writing professors”, “knowing the expectations of college English classes and professors”, “[r]egularly scheduled meetings between high school English teachers and first-year composition instructors”, “articulation meetings”, and “meeting and creating a dialogue with college instructors”. Some teachers wanted to see materials and take in college expectations through assignments and syllabi. However, some of their recommendations had little to do with collaboration. Other suggestions included taking college classes, scaffolding of writing instruction “from the early grades through high school” to increase consistency, and a move away from formulaic, timed essays.

Completion of Surveys by High School

The MSU area high school teacher survey was sent to twenty-six full-time high school English teachers at Calloway County High School, Graves County High School, and Marshall County High School. Eight surveys were completed for a response rate of 30.77%. The SCC area high school teacher survey was sent to fourteen full-time high school English teachers at Anna-Jonesboro Community High School, Massac County High School, and Vienna High School. Ten surveys were completed for a response rate of 71.43%. Complete responses are found in Appendix E.

College Student Surveys

For the student surveys, as explained previously, an emergent coding approach was used since a student is less likely to have access to the argot of teachers, which would allow them to more accurately describe their educational experiences. Instead, the students were

allowed to write with their own insights, from which themes could be drawn through interpretation.

Note that, since these were open-ended narrative response questions[29], it was possible for a student to provide more than one coded response to a question; in fact, one question specifically asks for two responses ("Describe the two most significant challenges you have personally experienced..."). The responses per respondent ratio was calculated to show that the trends identified were not overwhelmed by a few enthusiastic or effusive students providing a large number of responses to a question. The responses are coded and presented graphically below in Figure G; the full text of the student responses is found in Appendix F.

Completion of Surveys by College

The MSU student survey was sent to students enrolled in ENG 105 and ENG 150 during the Fall 2018 semester through an instructor solicitation; as a result, it is not possible to know exactly how many students received it; a comparison of the ENG 105 response rates with the other courses at both colleges indicates that non-participating instructors may have been a significant limiting factor. However, 804 students were enrolled in the two

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[29] The survey questions are provided in Chapter 3 and they are listed here for quick reference.

- 1. Identify your high school: [name, city, state]
- 2. Describe the two most significant challenges you have personally experienced in your college composition classes. [short narrative answer]
- 3. What are some ways that your high school teachers successfully prepared you to meet those challenges? [short narrative answer]
- 4. Next, what are some ways that your high school teachers could have better prepared you to meet those challenges? [short narrative answer]
- 5. Describe the ways in which your English class writing assignments are different, comparing high school to college. [short narrative answer]

courses (ENG 105: 735; ENG 150: 69). Thirty-four surveys were completed for a response rate of 4.23%. The SCC student survey was sent directly to students enrolled in ENG 111 and ENG 112 during the Fall 2018 semester. There were 220 students enrolled in the two courses (ENG 111: 161; ENG 150: 59). Twenty-eight surveys were completed for a response rate of 12.73%. A short analysis of the major response themes for each question follows.

"Describe the two most significant challenges you have personally experienced in your college composition classes"

When asked to describe the top two significant challenges in first-year composition (FYC), a substantial number of respondents placed the blame on themselves. Of the top five responses, two are concerned with work/study skills or motivation: time management (#1 with twenty responses, or 20.4% of total responses) and motivation or interest in the work (tied for #2 with ten responses, or 10.2% of total responses). Other significant areas of concern included assignment length, writing skill, volume of work and deadlines, and communication issues with instructors. Between the community college and state university students, no significant differences could be detected[30]; however, there were a larger percentage of honors students from MSU who identified volume of work/deadlines and research as a concern. Given the small number of responses, however, it would not be appropriate to draw firm conclusions about the MSU honors composition course as a whole

[30] This result differs slightly from the author's work on student transitions in 2017, where students at the community college were primarily concerned with pragmatic classroom issues (technology, formatting, communication), while students at the state university struggled with classroom demands (time management, paper length, elaborations, familiarity with academic conventions).

based on those answers. Ultimately, students have the most difficulty managing their time as they start college, and this concern is distributed evenly among community college and state university students.

"What are some ways that your high school teachers successfully prepared you to meet those challenges?"

For this question, which invited students to describe the pedagogical successes they experienced in high school, the most popular response was, unfortunately, that their high school teachers were of no help at all: thirteen responses, or 21.00% of all responses, leaving the teaching of writing fundamentals (eight responses, 12.90%) as a distant second. Clearly, this cannot literally be true, exposing the shortcomings of student assessment of educational experiences and the lack of extended reflection that the short survey format invites. There are some possible causes for these negative responses; perhaps students have not developed the metacognitive skills that would allow them to bring their high-school preparation into consciousness, or maybe they have internalized the "deprogramming" that many college instructors perform on their students when they enter FYC as they try to get rid of strategies and habits that those instructors believe are counterproductive. As significant and frustrating as this response is, however, it is important to keep in mind that in all of the remaining responses – 79.00% of them – students were able to describe a valuable experience. Of these experiences, the teaching of writing fundamentals, training in time management, assignments that approximated college-level assignments in frequency or length, research skills, formatting, and deliberate college-readiness training

were all identified as valuable. Again, there was little difference between the community college and state university students, with the exception of training in format (primarily citations and MLA). Frequency or quality of reading assignments was identified as important by three MSU honors class respondents and no one else.

"Next, what are some ways that your high school teachers could have better prepared you to meet those challenges?"

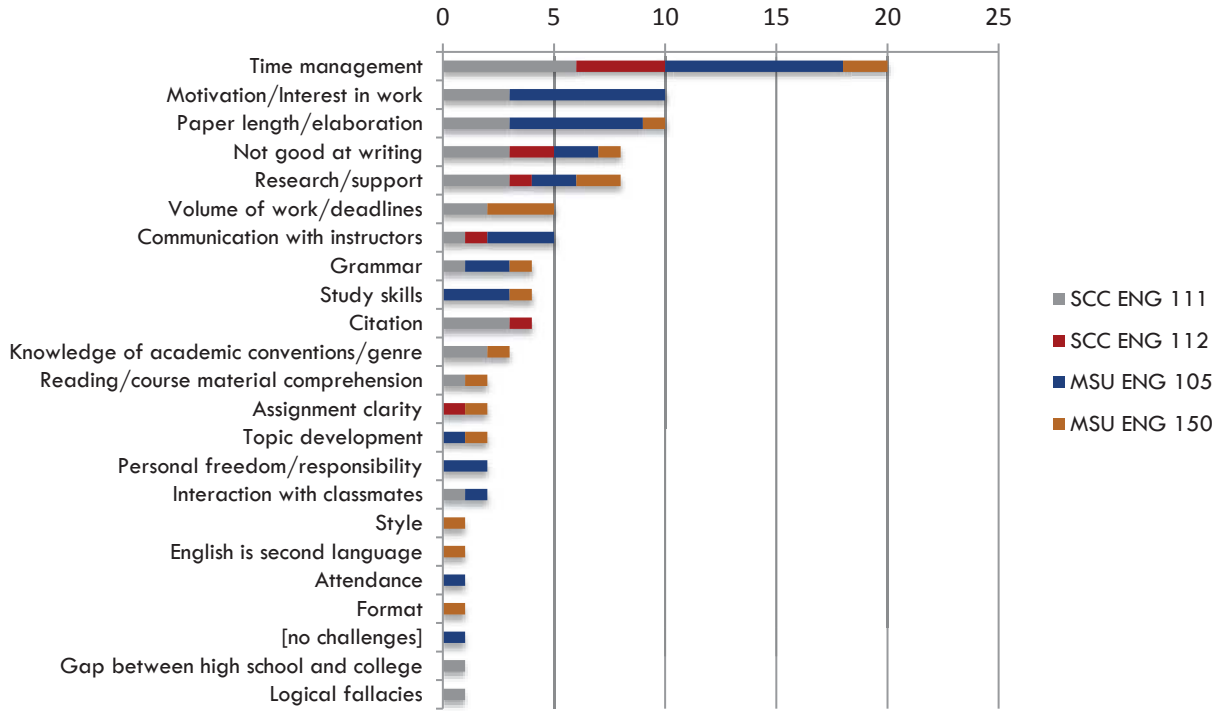
Following the previous question, students were asked to identify the ways that their high school teachers could have better prepared them to meet the challenges of FYC. Increasing the rigor and expectations was the most popular answer, with eleven out of sixty-five responses (16.9%). These responses included a recommendation for teachers to be "more strict on making sure we stuck to the page requirements", "more strict on due dates", and to have "raised s[t]andards". This does not necessarily mean that the students would have welcomed the increased expectations, or that they would have succeeded in the face of greater rigor; in fact, student failure, teacher time management, and an emphasis on test preparation may make it difficult to impossible under current conditions to raise standards to the extent that students envision. Nonetheless, they have an instinctive sense that the most fail-safe path to improvement and success is to do the work and to do a great deal of it. However, 41.50% of the responses could be characterized as simply doing more of what is already done in the high school classroom. Again, there were no significant differences between the community college and state university, and seven of the responses (10.8%) expressed that no improvement was possible.

"Describe the ways in which your English class writing assignments are different, comparing high school to college"

The final question is the most significant in determining the extent to which students perceive a cultural difference between their high school and college experiences, at least as those differences would be expressed in writing assignments. Assignment length was the most frequently identified factor, not surprisingly to the teacher (at either level) who recognizes that meeting the page requirement is foremost in their students' anxieties. In fact, differences in assignment scope (length, frequency, and depth) comprised thirty-four of the total responses or 38.6% of total responses. However, it is expected that a higher level course would have assignments of a larger scope, and furthermore, class sizes keep high school assignments shorter, since teachers do not have the time to assess and respond to longer essays. Responses that potentially indicate a cultural difference include increased independence, increased rigor and refinement, different topics, broader choice, and research requirements. Individual student responses and site conditions reflecting cultural difference are explored in greater detail below in the Findings section, where the question of student perception of cultural differences between high school and college is considered using this survey question as a springboard.

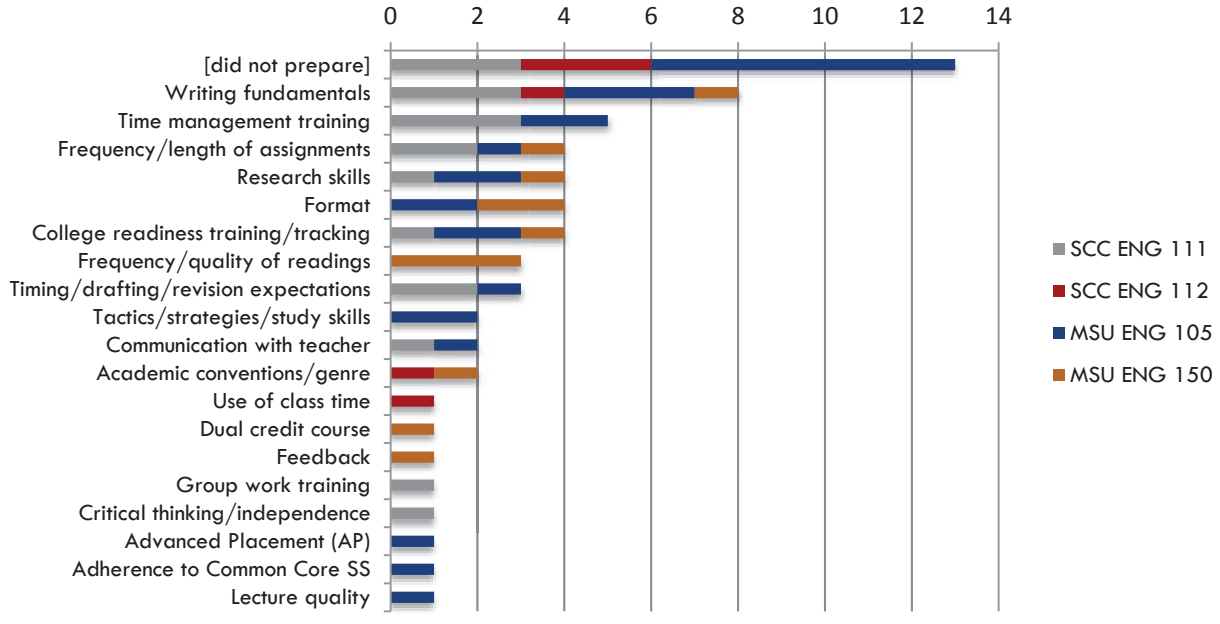
Describe the two most significant challenges you have personally experienced in your college composition classes.

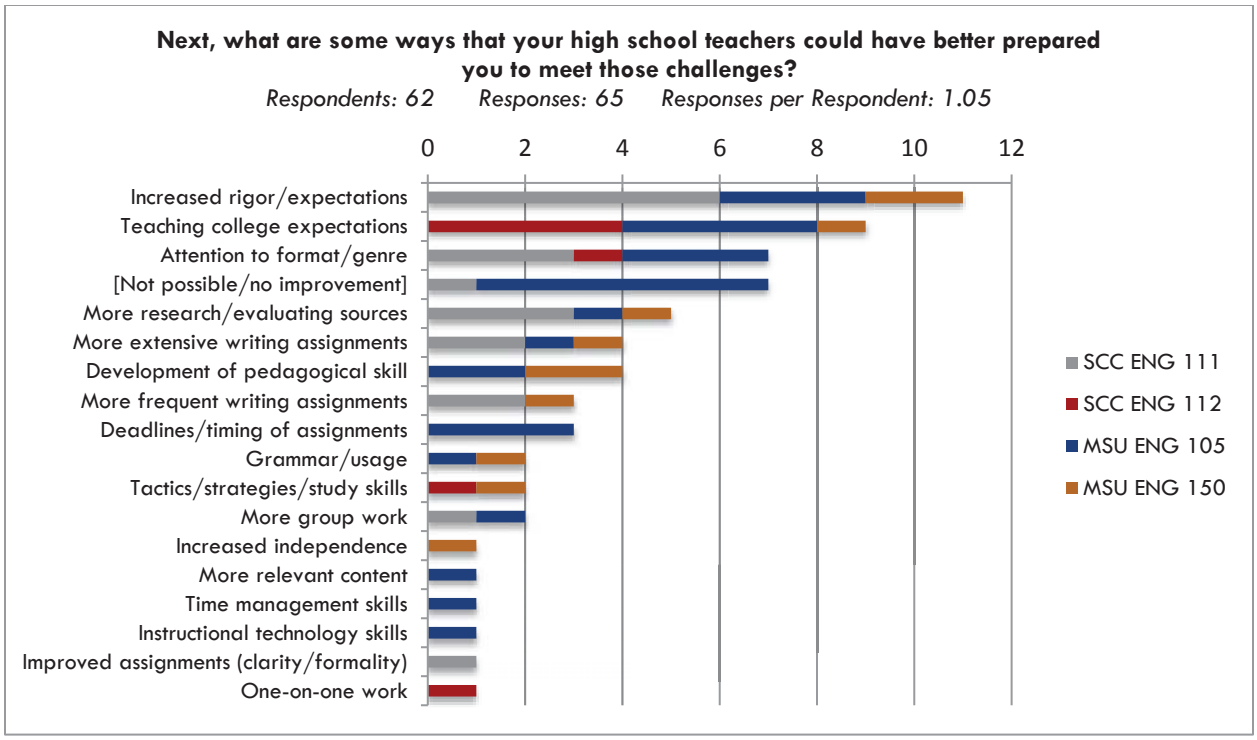
Respondents: 62 *Responses: 98* *Responses per Respondent: 1.58*



What are some ways that your high school teachers successfully prepared you to meet those challenges?

Respondents: 62 *Responses: 62* *Responses per Respondent: 1.00*





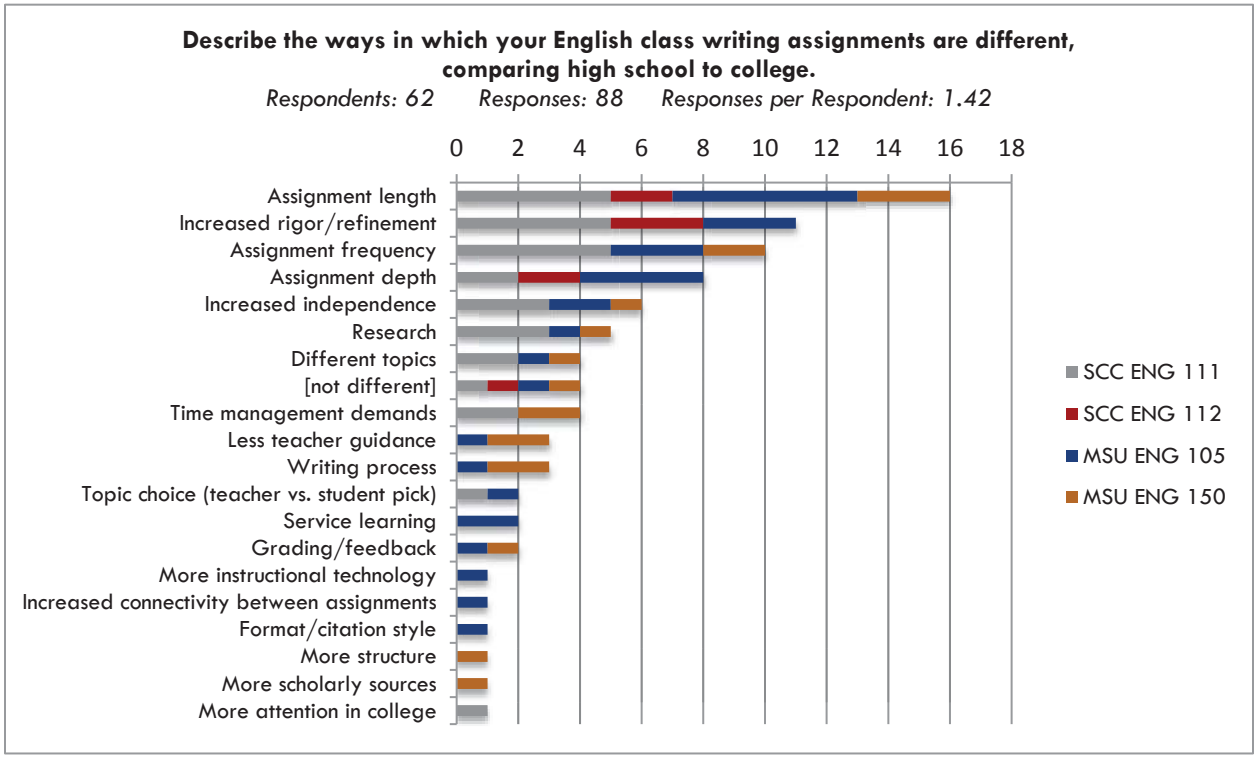


Figure G - Coded Student Survey Responses

Interview Supplement Results

As described in Chapter 3, these interviews were transcribed and coded for themes using HyperRESEARCH qualitative research software, with the codes emerging from the responses. The codes were then used to create a description of the participant and their situation through a narrative, which supplements the survey results and the literature review information. Since these interviews are supplemental to the survey results, only one representative was chosen from each sector of educators in the study sites, each serving as an envoy for their institution and level of schooling. Information that could be personally identifying, including gender, areas of specialization, and professional accomplishments, may have been changed to preserve the privacy of the interviewees.

College Instructor Interviews

Christine: Murray State University

Christine, an instructor of first-year honors composition (among other courses) at MSU, is a tenured professor who also teaches literature courses. While she has had a relatively lengthy career at MSU, she taught at other universities previously. She earned a Ph.D. in English from a major southeastern university and did undergraduate work in different, related fields, finally specializing in Rhetoric & Composition and two areas of literature. She has published textbooks and several articles within the field of Rhetoric & Composition, with some recent publishing forays into her literary specializations. She has also performed administrative service in multiple roles during her career at MSU.

Christine's teaching philosophy is pragmatic and nurturing. First, she tends to be career-oriented with her students, since work represents a major investment of one's time and can be such a significant factor in one's overall satisfaction. Additionally, future

employment provides a practical outlet for student writing energies. Christine explained, “We spend so much time at work, I think it's good to know [about a career field] ahead of time so you can go in a different direction before you spend years devoted to something that you wind up hating - I'm speaking from experience, because that happened to me”. As a result, she integrates career-focused work into her classes, since it is relevant and, frankly, more interesting to her as a reader than obligatory current-events essays: “if I go with career, then that's almost like an automatic interest for them. It also gets away from sort of the tried... the things that I don't want to read quite honestly...if they don't care, you're sure not going to”. When building a classroom environment and establishing the terms of student relationships, she considers herself to be a nurturing teacher that creates a “fairly non-threatening environment”, since “people learn better when they're not threatened and when they're comfortable, when they feel like they can ask questions and they won't get their heads bit off”. She adds, “I genuinely love my students...Once I get to know them, it feels like a really close relationship - like I'm their mom, sort of”.

Regarding her perception of the differences between high school and college English, she observed that “they probably read more literature than they do in our English Comp class” and that there is a decreased focus on essays and “academic” reading and writing. In keeping with her career-oriented teaching philosophy, she noted the limited vocational utility of literary analysis (“I think it has limited application for the Pre-Med major, for instance”), but then tapped into area of controversy within the greater Humanities field: how much should educators adapt content for a curriculum strategy that focuses on workplace preparation? Christine continued: “We want them all to be humanized...it really sounds like I'm trying to turn the university into a technical school, but realistically, they

need skills at reading, academic writing...understanding nuance, and understanding sarcasm, understanding in-depth arguments, and then being able to write in response to that". Christine understands and respects the value of the humanities – she teaches literature courses and has written articles on literary texts – but has a perceptible concern for what her students need from a writing course.

Christine recognized that high school teachers have a different set of pressures, especially those extending from workload ("they turn those things over [provide feedback] overnight...[t]he sheer numbers of students they deal with...is amazing) and standardized testing. She perceived that high school teachers often have to actively teach skills that she can simply expect her students to figure it out: "I don't teach it; I just say, 'Turn in two to three paragraphs'. I feel like they probably are spending more time saying, 'Okay, here's how to develop a paragraph'." Those pressures also come from standards that high school teachers must meet, which she described as "rigid" and probably antithetical to prevailing attitudes in the university: "[t]hat just would not work for college teachers who value their academic freedom". She concluded, "I feel like they have a lot more pressure to perform than we do".

A final difference perceived by Christine relates to professional initiation. She recognized that college instructors typically have little formal pedagogical training, while high school teachers are steeped in it. This means that high school teachers tend to emphasize practice over theory ("they probably use a lot of those K-W-L [Know/Want-to-Know/Learned] kind of strategies...they use more buzz-wordy type of teaching than we do, simply because [most of us] don't even take education classes") while the professional

requirements of the university professoriate (theoretic mastery, conference presentation, publishing) do not necessarily imply pedagogical skill.

When describing the preparedness level of her students, Christine remarked that time management and work ethic issues ("underperformance") distinguish her high performing students and low performing students. They appear to have the capacity to do the work ("almost all of them are really bright and capable"), but sometimes lack the desire or school-life balance; problems include "not coming to class, not turning in the work, turning in halfhearted work...time management". She explained that it is not always reasonable to conclude that a student is inherently a good writer because of their status as an honors student (as some of her students have been), since many of them are working in fields where written communication is not considered the main determining factor in academic achievement, such as Pre-Veterinary or Engineering.

Finally, Christine described the activities and behaviors that she believed would help increase her awareness of conditions in high school English. Her first recommendation was reciprocal site visits ("we probably should visit high school classrooms" and "I think high school teachers should visit our classrooms"). Some of the value in these activities comes from just "sitting in a room together and talking". Additionally, she notes that students could also benefit from site visits "just [to] sit in ...and see what the atmosphere is like". The interviewer and Christine briefly discussed the "Looking Both Ways" collaboration in New York City (see Chapter 2) which involved site visits, and she hinted at those intangible, holistic aspects of workplace reality that can only be understood through bodily presence: "when you walk in, and the whole building smells like lunch".

Lori: Shawnee Community College

Lori, a full-time instructor of first-year composition at SCC, primarily teaches composition, also serving as a "lead instructor", or a coordinator of contingent and dual-enrollment faculty teaching the same classes. Lori has earned a terminal degree[31] in her field. She said that she had some success in publishing early on in her career, but does not specify whether that was creative writing or scholarly activity, and it appears that her academic work focuses primarily on teaching. In fact, her passion for teaching is evident throughout the interview. She explained that she likes "seeing the students create their own compositions" and later, she contrasts administrative burdens with teaching, stating that "to me, the classroom's the best job of all".

Lori's teaching philosophy is student-oriented – she described ongoing efforts to "adapt and...keep current with the students" and build technological skills to "try to teach the way that they're learning" – but is also informed by theories of pedagogy within the field of Rhetoric and Composition. She situated herself in the "expressivist camp of writing theory", which is associated with process theory[32] and implies that she sees value in the process (as opposed to the product) of writing for the student and envisions the role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning. She specifically cited Peter Elbow and Donald Murray as influences; Elbow being the influential teacher and composition theorist who, among other

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[31] e.g.: D.A., Ph.D, M.F.A., Ed.D, etc.

[32] Incidentally, the FYC curriculum at SCC is intentionally process-oriented. The course description for ENG 111 states that the "course is taught employing a process approach to writing". A reference to process in the course description predates Lori's employment at SCC (for instance, a 2005 course catalog states that "[s]tudents will develop an awareness of the writing process" (Shawnee, *Catalog: 2004-2005*), but it seems to have become more explicitly stated since that time.

things, called for a rearranging of the relationship between teacher, student, and student writing, and Murray being one of the earliest advocates for the application of process theory in writing. She nuanced this view by explaining that “it's an ongoing process for me” and cites additional influences from Linda Flower (referenced in Chapter 2) and John Hayes, who added to the insights of process pedagogy by studying writing as a cognitive process.

To Lori, the differences between high school and college English classrooms seem to represent modest variations in emphasis. As she noted, college classrooms “stress much more the revision process, and the fleshing out of ideas with evidence and with proof”; the situation of the high school classroom, on the other hand, requires a more rules-oriented process, or “dogmatic mindsets [emphasizing] pros and cons... [in college], you need to be able to argue for a compromise...and explain why that compromise is much more valuable than the pros or cons”. In a later portion of the interview, she was careful to explain that blame for student underpreparedness prior to college should not necessarily be placed on teachers – “there's a lot of people [blame] could be assigned to”. She has seen a closing of the gap between high school and college pedagogy during her career, and she attributed some of these changes to the propagation of dual-credit courses.

Outside of the classroom, Lori described differences in the distribution of work. At SCC at least, there appears to be a substantial volume of service work (“administrative work, paperwork and meeting HLC[33] requirements, and making sure that ICCB[34]...is...”) that reduces the instructor’s ability to focus on teaching. She does not go so far as to state that

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[33] Higher Learning Commission; accreditation body in the Midwest and South-Central US.

[34] Illinois Community College Board; state-level board that provides oversight for community colleges in Illinois.

high school teachers have a lower burden of service work, but offered a perspective that perhaps “the stakes are greater here, with what we have to go through, and the type of pressure that's put from higher up”. Lori was careful to make sure her described perception of work distribution and workplace politics may not be generalizable, but is perhaps confined to SCC, Illinois community colleges, or some other category of institution in which she has first-hand experience. Additionally, one identified area of difference between high school and college English relates to professional culture. Lori refers to the value of “intellectual freedom”, and clarified that college instructors have “more freedom[35] than what you would in the high school, and more latitude”, while high school teachers have to be more “wary”.

Regarding the preparedness of her students, she recognizes the tension between the fact that her students are legal adults for whom maturity has not necessarily caught up with the legal designation; as she explained, students are treated like adults “until you give me a reason not to”, but they also have notable maturity issues that limit their effectiveness in the classroom. As a result, Lori is careful to distinguish between preparedness for “being a writer” and “being a college student”, or academic achievement and maturity. She described technology as a sort of double-edged sword; on one hand, many students lack access to technology and do not know how to type effectively, defying the influential “digital natives” narrative and directing instructional time toward word processing skills, and on the other

[35] Lori makes a general statement about academic freedom; however, there are ongoing discussions in the literature and informally about whether these principles are equally applicable to contingent faculty who make up a large and increasing share of English faculty in general, or if the benefits of academic freedom apply primarily to tenured faculty.

hand, digital tools have the capability to recommend quick style and usage fixes, theoretically leaving more time for revision and idea development.

While Lori seemed to be reasonably confident in her awareness of what happens in high school English classrooms, recommended activities and behaviors to increase awareness included “a forum in which we could get together”. She also referenced experiences in summer workshops at local state universities. Ultimately, she is more interested in processes than writing goals; as she explained, “I'm assuming that clear, concise, competent composition is what their ultimate goal is...how they obtain that objective, those are the things that I don't know”.

High School Teacher Interviews

Susan: Murray State University Area Teacher

Susan, a veteran high school teacher, teaches upper-level English classes, including dual-credit and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. She brings a strong set of credentials to the classroom, including a Master’s degree, a Gifted endorsement, hundreds of hours of TESOL education, and National Board Certification, which is designed to indicate a level of teaching preparation that exceeds the minimum standards of state licensure. Incidentally, Susan’s career trajectory, as she described it, underscores the way in which ongoing efforts to address the articulation and retention problem between high schools and colleges have already broken down some of the cultural divisions between high schools and colleges. Her experience with dual credit and Advanced Placement – two strategies for fulfilling the FYC requirement in high school – has given her extensive experience with college-level expectations all within the boundaries of the high school. As a result, she is uncommonly aware of the conditions of college English.

Susan's teaching philosophy is individualized and student-centered, placing some responsibility on the teacher for devising ways to make the student motivated. She uses the image of an old proverb – "you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make them drink" – to iterate the importance of "intrinsic" motivation. For her, teaching is not merely about transferring information or developing skills. If the student does not want to learn or do, the teacher's task becomes inordinately difficult; as a result, the teacher's job involves laying the foundation of motivation. In the conversation on teaching philosophy, Susan focused little on theory or content – her insights could have applied within any discipline – and she preferred to speak about learning in general. Later on, she enthusiastically chatted about discipline-specific efforts, like using local literature in English composition (incidentally, an area of inquiry for the author, see Garrett), where local authors were brought into an FYC classroom, but her philosophical underpinnings are oriented toward student learning.

Susan has well-informed perceptions of the difference between high school and college English since her everyday work spans both sides of the divide. One difference involves student independence, which is an area of difference also identified in the student surveys. As she explained, "I have them choose their own topics...in high school, a lot of time they just sit around and wait for someone else to say, 'this is what you're going to write about, and this is how long it has to be'". She also noted that college-level writing conventions – citation styles, academic honesty standards – are not always taught in the high school; when these are overlooked by students, she tells her students that "you just plagiarized, and this is a failing paper in college".

One major difference identified has to do with the composition of the student body. In public high schools, all populations are represented, including those that require greater teacher attention. Students with learning disabilities are the most visible representatives of this group, and they receive the most attention in the high school, with specialized staff that are trained to meet their needs. However, populations that also require more of the teacher's attention include students with serious socioeconomic or home-life related challenges. While these students also exist in colleges, their proportion is lower because many are unable or unwilling to overcome the barriers to college enrollment or completion. High schools, alternatively, must support these students, and they loom large in Susan's concerns. She told stories of immense social dysfunction when contrasting well-prepared and poorly prepared students. Well-prepared students, as a rule, "have parents who are not forcing them to work in after-school jobs...they're not involved in things like drugs and alcohol and they're not worried about if they're going eat, when they're going to eat, and if their house is going to be warm in the winter time, and if they're going to have clothes to wear". Other students have "one or more parents or guardians in jail...teenage pregnancies and drug issues", and she contrasts this dysfunction with the relative placidity of her own growing-up experience: "When I was in school, it was like, 'don't chew gum, man'; now it's like, 'don't have sex in the bathroom'... and 'oh my gosh, why are you vaping?'...'What's in your water bottle, buddy? Is that Vodka?'" In one case, a student had a mother who was addicted to heroin, and his "excellent" writing skills were offset by his ongoing worry about his seven-year-old brother. While it is important in an interview analysis to determine whether a striking incident is "idiosyncratic or characteristic", as Seidman (101) warns in his text on interviewing as qualitative research, these stories serve to reinforce the point

that such situations take up more mental real estate for high school teachers than college instructors, at least anecdotally.

Since Susan has significant awareness of conditions in college English, it was difficult to determine what kinds of activities and behaviors that she believed would help increase awareness. She responded by noting the ways in which her classrooms sometimes differ from other teachers at her school. “My class is a lot different than other people's classes”, she explained, because she shifts responsibility to the students, but, she adds, “but I don't know about a lot of high school teachers who are comfortable giving up the control”. Presumably, then, she believes that shifting to a model that reflects college-level writing and addressing the barriers that keep teachers from relinquishing control to students are the activities that would help increase awareness.

Patricia: Shawnee Community College Area Teacher

Patricia is a high school English teacher in the SCC area with several years of experience. Her undergraduate degree is in English Education and she finished a Master’s degree recently. She describes herself as someone who always knew she was drawn to education (“this is my calling...I need to be working with students”), though the English component did not crystallize until high school. However, once she settled on English Education, there was no looking back: “I am one of those...rare people that never changed my college major”.

As with the other educators in the interview portion of this study, she expressed a teaching philosophy aligned with addressing the needs of students (“the job of an educator is to try to meet the needs of the students”), and she directly differentiates meeting student needs with “state requirements”. Specifically, she refers to evaluation tools and college

entrance exams ("ACT" ..."SAT"[36]). The sense, then, is that Patricia believes the state's standardized testing regime, in some respects (e.g. content, emphasis, or subsequent use) is not aligned with student interests, those interests including "the routes that they want to take, and their plan for after high school".

Patricia explained the perceived difference between high school and college English classes as a difference in purpose. She understands FYC as "the stepping stone...for other classes, not only...in English, but also any other college class"; that is, FYC as a skill-building instrument for all disciplines, including English; she provides this insight as an assessment of circumstances as they exist, not as an evaluation of whether this is an effective or desirable use of the course. This perception, for Patricia, comes from personal experience, from "when I was in school and taking those classes myself and...knowing the process of how those English composition classes are for every major". Her understanding is closer to that of David Bartholomae (see Chapter 2, Student Writing Goals), who noted that it is "the nature of a liberal arts education that a student...must learn to try on a variety of voices and interpretive schemes...as a literary critic one day and an experimental psychologist the next" (4); this understanding would perhaps chafe with that of Lori at SCC, who sees inherent value in the process (as opposed to the product) of writing. High school English, on the other hand, would be more focused on the study of literature, though Patricia was careful to note that "it's not all fiction". Nevertheless, high school teachers are limited in their ability to explore communicative and non-fiction writing by state requirements and

[36] The ACT and the SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) are the two major standardized college admissions tests in the US; Illinois public schools switched from the ACT to the SAT in 2016 (Rado).

Common Core State Standards. This might be a matter of implementation since the *writing* standards in Common Core are remarkably aligned with college-level English courses, but high school English teachers are not only trying to fulfill the writing standards but must also integrate reading standards for literature and informational texts (Common Core, *Common Core*). The literature emphasis in high school becomes more apparent when discussing student preparedness. Patricia explained that her high achieving students show writing strength, "but solely based in fiction and poetry", since their AP course is a literature course; they have weaknesses when it comes to "using research and supporting their claims".

Additionally, Patricia perceived a difference between high school and college English deriving from the rate of change. College English seems to possess some fixity, but the work of a high school teacher is in flux: "[evaluation tools] have been changing" and "[on] my end with the secondary education; it's changed quite a bit, and the expectations that we have to do, and what we're expected to cover".

Patricia characterizes the preparedness of her students as differing based on motivation. Even students who are underprepared for specific tasks typical in an FYC course – for instance, the AP students whose experience is primarily in literature analysis – are sorted out based on motivation: "even if they do struggle, there is this internal motivation to try to figure it out or to at least come to me and ask questions". The low achieving students, on the other hand, have little internal motivation, and external motivators (e.g. grades) are often insufficient. The sense is one of short-sightedness, where "they're not concerned with bettering their writing…it's just, 'let me just get through this assignment'". The more short-sighted, low-achieving students, then, struggle with college preparedness,

because she cannot get through to them “about college, and about the classes, and what they should expect”.

As stated, Patricia observed some meaningful differences between high school and college English; to increase awareness, she recommended an “open line of communication”. In her experience, that open line only seems to exist among the dual credit teachers, since dual credit teachers have an obligation to both the high school and the local college with which they are associated. She believes that it would help to be “present in those conversations” about curriculum and teaching strategies in high school. She explained further that such an open line of communication could also help students since the teachers would gain awareness of what their students will experience in college. Her primary source of information is incidental interactions with the students themselves: “The best that I have received would be maybe some of my...students...that maybe are taking a night class and they run into English 111 and they talk to me about what they're doing; that's the only way I know what's happening”.

Findings (by Research Question)

The survey and interview results are interesting and illuminating on their own; they open one small window into the needs, expectations, and conditions of two ordinary sites of public education - representative, in many ways, of the kinds of schools where most students in the United States learn. These sites are, of course, products of their local contexts (for instance, they have relatively low ethnic and cultural diversity and they are rural or semi-suburban) but in many ways, like mission, funding, student struggles, or

teacher workplace issues, they are like hundreds of other public institutions across the country. However, there are aspects of these insights that are particularly relevant and deserve to be drawn out for special scrutiny: if there are differences in professional culture, are teachers and students aware of them, and how should they be described and understood? When it comes to goals – the qualities of college-level writing – do educators in high schools and colleges align with one another? Is there value in pursuing a collaborative effort as contemplated in this project based on the real-life conditions of the site? These are the questions that will drive the rest of this chapter, as the surveys and interviews are used to draw some probable conclusions about the data collection sites. These conclusions, furthermore, may be useful for researchers looking to illuminate their understanding of similar sites or contrast the qualities of these sites with their own.

1. What are the significant differences in professional culture between high school and college English teachers that impact the student and teacher experience?

The question of differences in professional culture was explored at some length in Chapter 2; there, a satellite view of the differences was historicized, expressed and labelled. The survey and interview results, however, provide a close-up view of the differences in professional culture at a particular selection of sites. As would be expected, nuances were revealed that add complexity to a potentially binary narrative: the "high school teachers are from Venus, college professors are from Mars" model. The Likert-type portion of the survey results provided little usable information about the differences themselves; in fact, the questions assume the differences already exist. However, the answers to the final short narrative question ("*What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in college English composition (types of writing assignments, types of reading*

assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)?") help to clarify the differences that the respondents perceive as meaningful to address through coordinated effort. These differences appear to be primarily related to professional oversight and a lack of familiarity with the artifacts of teaching.

The term "professional oversight" is broad, but intentionally so. It is meant to cover all of those structures that are designed to influence the content and practice of teaching. These include, most significantly, standardized testing regimes and the relative importance of standards and objectives documents. Tests and standards documents are intended to influence teaching in a direction determined by the stakeholders who develop them; these groups often include teachers, but they also include other parties – administrators, regulators, curriculum developers, and others – who may be working at cross-purposes. Both sets of educators are influenced by these factors, but tests and standards documents differ at each level, and college instructors tend to be freer to disregard or work around them at their professional discretion. This allows college instructors more freedom to infuse their courses with their own values, but also generates inconsistency.

One survey respondent frankly stated that "due to the amount of accountability placed on standardized tests ...there are seldom opportunities...to discuss and practice college-level writing strategies, or any writing that is bound to be polished and published over the course of a semester"; he further added lack of communication is not because of awareness but because of the focus on testing. What he means, perhaps, is that even if high school and college educators did talk to one another, there may not be much for them to talk about, since the high school teachers are so limited in their ability to make change. In the

interviews, three of the participants offered testing as a significant area of difference ("I do think that [teachers] are under a lot of pressure to get the students to score well on standardized exams"..."Where I teach they are very focused on test scores") and the high school teachers appear to understand that the stakes are high, for the school and for the individual student. Tests, then, have an indelible impact on the types of writing and reading that high school teachers can assign, which influences what students are prepared to do when they graduate. The differing results between high school and college teachers on the perception of student preparedness (questions #1 and #2 on the Likert-type scale) show that those test-directed activities do not always align with what college instructors would like students to do.

Standards documents differ on the level of scope, significance in curriculum development, deference accorded by teachers, and focus. At most colleges, standards are developed in-house with some outside influence (but not direction) by accreditation bodies (e.g. The Higher Learning Commission; Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) and articulation agencies (e.g. Illinois Articulation Initiative). Further, they are influenced by disciplinary statements on college writing, like the *Council of Writing Programs Administrators Outcomes Statement for FYC*. Documents provided by these organizations are all focused on writing or skills that are a direct accessory to effective writing, like critical thinking skills, informational reading, or knowledge of conventions. Conversely, high school teachers must develop curricula (via lesson plans and other documents) that support the objectives of the Common Core State Standards, at least in the forty-one states (and five of the six US districts or territories) that have adopted them. These standards are well-defined by grade level, and schools often purchase materials designed to work with

the standards. Additionally, high school English teachers are required to teach to multiple areas of achievement; in addition to writing, they have to meet literature and literacy goals. For teachers, there is ongoing oversight and there are genuine consequences for failure to meet the standards. Subsequently, teachers on both sides of the divide felt like standards and objectives represented an area of mutual misunderstanding. One college instructor wanted consistent written updates of high school standards and expectations, and one high school teacher pleaded, "please remember that we are bound to the high school standards which do not always align, and ultimately we are assessed by OUR standards, not the college standards". In the interviews, the high school teachers spoke at some length about the standards and the pressures they create; college instructors, on the other hand, were aware that standards exist, and not much more than that.

2. Are educators aware of the significant differences in professional culture between high school and college English teachers?

In one sense, this research question is loaded. Asking the question assumes there is a significant difference in professional culture between high school and college English teachers of which an educator could be aware. However, for the purposes of developing a collaborative plan for self-selected teachers who *already hold a belief* that there is a difference in professional culture, there is value in exploring that awareness. Educators are clearly aware of the differences in professional culture; the data used to identify those differences comes from the teachers themselves.

However, there are some practices and discourses of which educators are aware, yet they are not aware of them *as differences*. These topics could be helpful to bring out in collaboration since they often indicate those areas whereby a particular community of

practice has negotiated an accepted approach to the challenge of fulfilling a goal with limited reflection on why that approach was chosen. The persistence of the ubiquitous "five-paragraph essay" provides a clear example. Variations on the five-paragraph essay – where the student writes an introduction, roughly three body paragraphs supporting the idea presented in the introduction, and a conclusion – are used as a pattern and a pedagogical tool to teach novice writers how to organize the presentation of ideas. They are widely panned by teachers and scholars on both sides of the divide as being expressively limiting, suppressing creative thought and creating dependency (Nunes; Miller), akin to training wheels on a bicycle that keep children from learning to balance (Warner 2).

Nonetheless, the approach is retained pragmatically by high school teachers because the format is so useful for achieving high scores on timed, on-demand writing for standardized tests, and because their workload is greater than college instructors in terms of student numbers and required content, reducing available feedback time and necessitating more, shorter assignments that are still functionally complete. Furthermore, the approach is often begrudgingly retained by college instructors since have to work with what their students already know. Many of those college instructors have strong views on the limitations of the five-paragraph format, citing its use as evidence of the sorry state of high school writing instruction and the pedagogical tyranny of standardized tests. However, without first-hand knowledge of the "joint enterprise" (Wenger 77) that high school teachers must negotiate in their community of practice, which includes serving an enormously diverse student body in terms of capabilities and socioeconomic status, the need to fulfill content requirements, and (whether they like it or not) the use of high-stakes standardized assessments, those college instructors may never fully understand how the

five-paragraph essay (or variations thereon) is the least bad option for many teachers and schools. Cultural differences like these, because they reflect workplace realities that are accepted and adapted to rather than reflected upon, are productive areas for building awareness among educators.

The answer, then, to the question of whether educators are aware of the significant differences in professional culture, is yes and no. They are certainly aware of the differences, but may not, in some cases, be aware that they *are* differences. A distinction must be made between those areas where the survey and interview participants expressed differences that are not perceived as differences and those that are. Examples of differences that are not perceived as such include student preparedness and the qualities of college-level writing; these differences are explored in greater detail in the research question below on alignment of goals. Areas where participants express differences that are perceived as such, however, include professional initiation and development, administration, and the relative importance of standardized testing.

Professional initiation refers to the process by which new participants are inducted into a particular field of practice. For high school teachers, that process is governed tightly by state licensure requirements, usually demanding a bachelor's degree in education with coursework in a content area and student teaching. The emphasis is more on pedagogy, standardization, and practical considerations like classroom management. The requirements are looser for college instructors; at a minimum, they must have a master's degree and eighteen graduate hours for the discipline in which they are teaching. There is no licensure, experience requirement, or mandatory pedagogical training, though requirements are applied informally through the hiring process. Participants in that hiring

process often look for other markers of scholarly and pedagogical achievement in addition to advanced degrees and teaching experience, like publications, conference presentations, and experience in service work. Ultimately, the credentials are expertise in the field and learning on the job. These differences in initiation simultaneously create, reflect, and cement differences in professional culture between high schools and colleges. The interview participants exemplify the initiation process on either side of the divide: the college instructors both have terminal degrees and cited conference attendance and publication history typical to their institution type (community college or state university), and both of the high school teachers had degrees in Education and subsequent professional development or certifications related to pedagogy (e.g., PD in classroom management, National Board Certification, Gifted endorsement).

Survey and interview respondents both cited the spectre of standardized tests as enormously influential in high schools. This includes the college instructors, who perceived the pressures that such testing places on high school teachers in terms of curriculum goals and writing assignments: “I do think that they are under a lot of pressure to get the students to score well on standardized exams; for a long time [previously], they had to do well on the portfolio system”. The high school teachers confirmed the observation that decisions are driven by testing. An interview subject noted that “those things are being pushed…where I teach they are very focused on test scores”. One survey respondent, further, made the observation that his grade level focused exclusively on timed essays “due to the amount of accountability placed on standardized tests…there are seldom opportunities in my curriculum to discuss and practice college-level writing strategies”. Consequentially, standardized tests represent one of those cultural differences between

high schools and colleges of which teachers are acutely aware, since their influence is pervasive for high school teachers, while college instructors only take in their influence secondhand.

3. Do high school and college English teachers align with one another on the qualities of college-level writing?

Much has been made of the qualities of college-level writing in this project; why does this question matter in terms of exploring cultural differences between high school and college educators? It matters because, at least on paper, high school teachers and college instructors share at least one significant goal: preparing students to write at a college level. As discussed in Chapter 2 (Student Writing Goals), a proliferation of uses for writing means that the qualities of college-level writing cannot be found in its purpose or genre; there are too many possibilities. The fundamental quality that binds all college-level writing, then, if such a determination must be made, is likely found in rhetorical intentionality, or the ability to be "reader-oriented" in one's writing: to build bridges with audiences, to generate comprehension and consideration of ideas, and to participate in a conversation, rather than merely respond to a prompt.

"Rhetorical intentionality" is one definition that has the virtue of support in the literature on the topic, but it is not the only definition available. Teachers at all levels bring definitions based on experience and education, developed formally and informally, to their classrooms. Given that college-level writing is so important as a goal, it is useful to single it out for special consideration. If educators differ on such a significant question, it could provide a nucleation point for productive collaboration.

One of the short narrative answer questions provided to the high school and college teachers asked, "In one sentence, describe the fundamental qualities of college-level writing". The demand to present these qualities in one sentence was designed to draw out only the most salient qualities. The narrative answers were then coded. As described above, in addition to the qualities of focus, concision, development, originality, significance, complexity, critical thinking, research, a broad use of sources, close reading, and awareness of disciplinary concerns, half of the college instructors identified audience concerns explicitly, while others brought up audience implicitly. On the other hand, no high school teachers identified "audience" as a primary consideration in college-level writing, though one referenced identification of "rhetorical techniques" in a source. Qualities that they did identify include focus, concision, formality, thoughtfulness, purpose, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary, avoidance of plagiarism, adherence to a writing prompt, and appropriate exhibition of student abilities. While some of the categories are related ("purpose" and "significance" arguably share some commonalities), it is significant that high school teachers excluded consideration of audience.

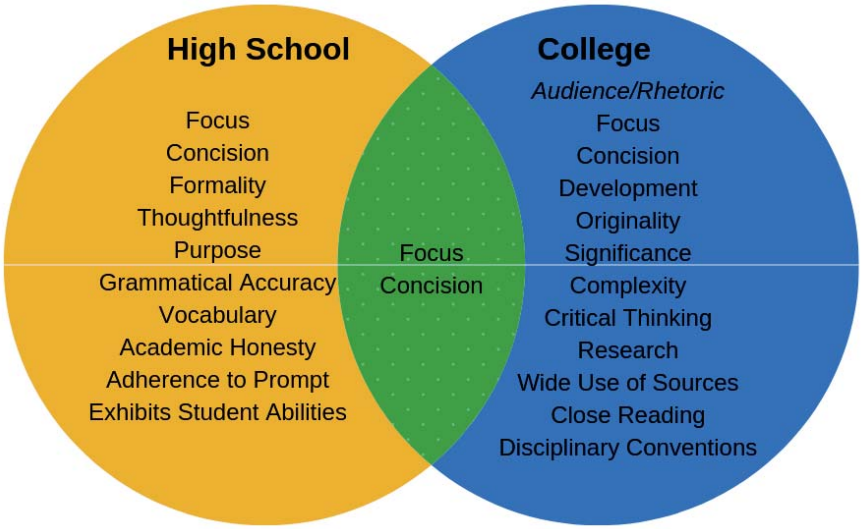

Figure H - Venn Diagram of Identified Qualities of College-Level Writing

A reasonable conclusion, then, is that high school teachers do not entirely align on the question of college-level writing. While there are clearly similarities, educators in high schools and colleges express themselves differently on the important qualities. High school teacher concerns are oriented toward building blocks of writing ("strong thesis", "addresses the topic") and classroom realities for novice writers, seeking formal correctness ("command of the mechanics of formal standard English usage", "precise and clean", "professional", "solid vocabulary"). College instructor concerns are oriented toward argument, rhetoric, and research ("close reading, research, and critical thinking", "well-researched support").

These differences could possibly account for the disagreement between high school and college educators on the Likert-scale questions relating to student preparedness ("My students understand the expectations of college-level writing" and "My students are prepared to write at an appropriate level for first-year college composition"). Generally, the high school teacher respondents tended to believe their students understood the expectations of college-level writing and were prepared to meet them, while the college instructors, on average, felt that their students did not understand and were not prepared. If the participating teachers did not share a vision of important student goals like college-level writing, perhaps they were looking for different qualities in that writing, reflecting a cultural difference and a productive topic for collaborative reflection.

4. How do students perceive the difference in classroom practices as they transition from high school to college?

The final question in the student survey – "[d]escribe the ways in which your English class writing assignments are different, comparing high school to college" – was designed

in part to lead students to remark on the cultural differences between high schools and colleges without directly asking them to do so. A question like “how do you perceive the differences in professional culture between high schools and colleges” would either be taken as educational cant (“professional culture”) or disregarded as being outside of the student’s area of expertise. This question, on the other hand, allows the student to provide a response in an area where they do have some expertise: the perception of writing assignments. If there is a cultural difference between high schools and colleges, writing assignments are the place where students would be most likely to find it, since these assignments are high stakes (at least in terms of individual course grades) and since they represent the “product” of the course, as troublesome as that term can be.

The coded results of that question are not surprising to any English/Language Arts educator. As explained above, differences in assignment scope (length, frequency, and depth) make up 38.6% of total responses, which would be expected from a course at a higher level; students also noted a difference in increased independence, more refinement and rigor, a different repertoire of topic, more choices, and greater research requirements.

Those observations described above that fall outside of questions of scope – independence, refinement, differing topics, and weightier research expectations - are the most productive answers regarding cultural difference as understood by students. Interestingly, cultural differences are more apparent in the actual text of the students’ responses, as opposed to the coded analysis. Students noted, in the college composition classroom, “[m]ore freedom”, “more independent type work”, a focus on “the student's capability of producing original and thoughtful work”, and an atmosphere that is “more open minded [letting] students gather their own thoughts instead of preloading them with

what they want". A particular student was focused on workforce skills, and saw a better alignment of college instructor attitudes with employer needs: "[My FYC instructor] doesn't baby us like high school teachers...boss's and company's wont hire you if they have to baby you all the time [*sic*]". One student may have been referring to the literature focus of high school English classes when he explained that "I only remember writing papers about books we had read in class", while his college class requires more research. Additionally, it appears that MSU has a service learning option, which differs from almost any standard English class available in a high school.

Of course, many of these differences are due to the differing regulatory pressures and greater teaching workloads placed on high school teachers, but they may also reflect an underlying difference in objectives for high school and college English classes. It appears, then, that students do have some awareness of the cultural differences between high school and college, but their primary focus seems to be upon those factors that relate to their struggles: students who tussle with time management and drumming up an interest in writing topics will have issues of assignment scope - length, frequency, and depth – foremost in their minds.

5. Would an intentional, one-on-one collaborative program leading to greater awareness help high school teachers and college instructors improve their teaching?

One of the primary purposes for the specific site research is to determine if the intentional, one-on-one collaborative effort envisaged in this plan would be a valuable addition to the professional development options available for English teachers at the participating schools. It is apparent from the literature that collaborative efforts have some

value; they have created an opportunity for teachers in many contexts to expose one another to different ideas, to build relationships, and to transfer valuable ideas and practices from one educator to another in an atmosphere of collegial respect. However, not all approaches are appropriate for all contexts. What works at one school may fall flat at another, so it helps to seek understanding of a site to increase the chance that teachers are making a worthwhile investment of their limited time.

There were several questions in the surveys and interviews that were designed to address this research question. First, the twin Likert-type questions on the availability of opportunities to collaborate ("I have informal opportunities to collaborate with [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors]" and "I have formally organized opportunities to collaborate with [high school English teachers/college-level English instructors]") were designed to ensure that the opportunity to collaborate across the boundary between high school and college was not being satisfied by some other means. Next, the question "My institution provides support for professional development" was intended to determine whether or not the schools involved provide support for professional development (PD). If participants stated that they had formally organized opportunities to collaborate *and* received support for professional development, it would be reasonable to conclude that multi-level collaboration was already part of the PD mix, but if educators did not feel they had formal opportunities to collaborate but received institutional support for PD, that would indicate that collaboration was not a major part of current, otherwise well-supported PD activities. Finally, the Likert-type question "I believe greater awareness of conditions in [high school English/college English instructors] (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for

teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives) would help me improve my teaching" would indicate that collaboration leading to greater awareness of conditions would be valuable.

One of the short narrative answer questions provided sought to make the question of valuable professional development activities explicit to educators: "What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in [high school English/college English] (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)"? In their own words, teachers were given a chance to consider useful strategies without guidance from a preloaded set of responses. In the interview protocol, respondents were also given an opportunity to contemplate gainful strategies to increase awareness through a variant of the same question.

In the Likert-type survey questions, neither type of educator expressed a strong collective belief that they had formal or informal opportunities to collaborate with the other. This pair of questions produced the highest level of overall disagreement relative to the other questions. The weighted averages for these questions[37] were 2.06 (high school teachers) and 2.00 (college instructors) for informal collaboration opportunities and a mere 1.89 (high school teachers) and 2.00 (college instructors) for formal ones – the lowest result. Of the high school teachers, 83.3% gave a negative response regarding the presence of formal collaboration opportunities, and 80.0% of college instructors provided a negative

[37] 1.00 = "Strongly Disagree" 4.00 = "Strongly Agree" 2.50 = midpoint
See section above titled "Survey Results" for more information.

response. Teachers simply do not feel as if they have opportunities to collaborate with colleagues from the other side of the divide.

On the other hand, a strong majority of respondents believed that greater awareness of conditions in college-level English (for high school teachers) or high school English (for college instructors) would help them improve their teaching. In fact, while the high school teachers were enthusiastically positive, with a weighted average of 3.11 (midpoint = 2.5) and with 83.3% of respondents giving an agreeable response, the college instructors were unanimous in their positive response: one hundred percent of college instructor responses were agreeable. Speculatively, a factor that may have kept the high school teachers from being similarly unanimous is the number of them who already teach college-level English as a dual credit instructor; these teachers may feel that they already have all the awareness they need from actually teaching the class. On the contrary, none of the college instructors also teach high school (though they may have taught high school before becoming a college instructor).

At these sites, then, the consensus is that opportunities to collaborate are lacking and that greater awareness of conditions on the other side would help them improve their teaching. It only remains to establish that collaboration is a useful tool for increasing awareness. The value of collaboration in general was ascertained in Chapter 2, but the short narrative questions and interviews indicate that educators at these sites believe that a boundary-crossing collaborative effort could be helpful as well.

In the short narrative questions, when asked what kinds of activities would help increase awareness of conditions in high school or college English, there were several recommendations, including portfolios, and viewing writing samples and other artifacts of

practice, like assignments and assessments. However, over half of the college instructor respondents and half of the high school teacher respondents recommended some variation of cross-level contact. They used different terms, but the theme was the same:

- “Workshops for area high school English teachers hosted by MSU ENG 105 composition instructors”
- “periodic meetings/workshops with area HS teachers”
- “cross-level professional development opportunities”
- “Professional development time with college instructors and other high school teachers”
- “…a simple meet and greet would be nice”
- “Articulation meetings, maybe?”
- “I think actually meeting and creating a dialogue with college instructors would be beneficial”
- “collaborating with a teacher of a college English composition class”
- “Regularly scheduled meetings between high school English teachers and first-year composition instructors would be very helpful, at least I hope so”
- “I would love a best practices session with writing professors at MSU. That would be great”

The same theme carried through the interview responses. Christine, the instructor at MSU, for instance, recommended site visits for everyone involved in the process: “I think we probably should visit high school classrooms…high school teachers should visit our classrooms. I think high school students should probably visit our classrooms, and just sit in for 20 minutes and see what the atmosphere is like”. She added further, “I think sitting

in a room together and talking would be a really good thing". It seems that she saw some value in simply being bodily present with one another, taking in the environment. Lori, the instructor at SCC, wanted to see a forum for collaboration: "I think it'd be a great service for the college, and me, and the area high school and their teachers, if there was a forum in which we could get together". She specifically identified writing process, assignment qualities, and objectives as topics for collaborative discussion, and she added pragmatically, "on the selfish end of it, it's a great recruitment tool for the college". More positively stated, such a forum would strengthen the relationship between the college and the community it serves, which is an especially valid point for a community college where local service is inherently a part of the mission and assumed in the funding structure.

Susan, the MSU area high school teacher, did not directly recommend collaboration, perhaps since her professional life (as a full-time dual credit and Advanced Placement teacher) is so entrenched in college-level writing already. As discussed in the narrative above, she answered a different question when asked about what kinds of activities would help, and thus may not have been entirely clear on the purpose of the question. However, she did recommend that high school teachers take up a college-level pedagogical strategy by transferring responsibility to students and "giving up the control". Finally, Patricia, the SCC area high school teacher, appeared enthusiastic about collaboration: "I would love to see some kind of open line of communication...to be able to have a spot where you have post-secondary educators and your secondary educators come together...to really talk some things out". For her, dual credit teachers represent the only open line of communication; as a result, collaboration is accidental. The value, for her, is partly found in merely being a

presence: “I feel like we need a better understanding by being there and being present in those conversations and see what is going on”.

Conclusion

Based on the responses from a significant portion of the full-time English faculty at the subject colleges (30.3%) and major high schools associated with them (45.0%), it looks as if a collaborative effort crossing the boundary between the high school and college English classroom would be received positively as a valuable addition to their improvement efforts. Teachers, as a rule, feel positively about the support their institutions give to professional development, but collaborative efforts bringing in educators from other levels of schooling are not currently part of the mix, leaving a gap in the development of insights and curriculum alignment. Collaboration is not the only recommendation these teachers offer – they would also like to see assignments, writing samples, standards, objectives, and receive additional training in those areas in which they find their own understanding lacking – but they clearly see collaboration as one of the principal tools to achieve those goals.

The surveys and interviews in this data-gathering endeavor provided some important insights into the conditions at the college and high school sites. First, teachers are aware of some of the cultural differences between college and high school English. They identified themes of disciplinary initiation and professional oversight, including standardized testing and the emphasis upon standards and objectives documents. High school teachers are inducted into their disciplines in different ways, with high school teachers experiencing richer pedagogical training and state regulation, and college instructors experiencing

greater focus on the content of the discipline. Teaching at the high school level is dominated by attention to testing issues, especially since those tests impact the relative ranking of schools and teachers and provide a basis for evaluating college readiness for students. The stakes are high. As a result, high school assignments are often geared toward those tests, though there is a sense that the kind of writing that prepares a student to perform well on a timed, on-demand writing assignment does not necessarily align with the goals of college-level writing, even if there are some shared fundamental strategies between the two types of writing.

There are other differences, however, of which the surveyed teachers were less consciously aware. These areas include student preparedness and the qualities of college-level writing. High school teacher respondents, as a group, were much more confident in their belief that their students were prepared for college-level writing than the college instructors were, indicating misalignment of the criteria for determining preparedness in students. One potential area of misalignment was revealed when educators were asked to define the salient features of college-level writing. College instructors were much more likely than high school teachers to describe audience and research factors as central to the definition of college-level writing, while high school teachers focused more on surface level issues like concision, formality, and adherence to a prompt. Not a single high school teacher cited rhetoric or audience consideration as an important feature, even though these are important features in FYC outcomes statements and in the literature on college-level writing.

Finally, some data was gathered directly from students taking FYC at the two colleges. Survey responses revealed those areas where students sensed the cultural differences

between high school and college English; in addition to the expected differences in assignment scope, students perceived a greater sense of independence, higher expectations of writing refinement, a different set of acceptable topics, and more stringent research expectations, reflecting the priorities of college writing instructors, stakeholders in the development of college composition curriculum, and developers of college writing outcomes statements. In other survey questions, students identified the ways in which they have grappled with adjustment to the pressures of FYC. The most prominent struggles – time management and cultivating an interest in the content and tasks required in the course – seem internal to the student, and are added to the more typical battles with longer papers and more frequent deadlines. Many students also felt that more rigor in high school would have helped them prepare for college English, though these responses were likely aspirational; just because a student knows that a more rigorous course would have helped them prepare does not mean they would have risen to the occasion. Further, there are challenges related to teacher workload and meeting the needs of students with diverse abilities that may keep high school teachers from increasing the rigor in a way that would serve their most ambitious students. The contribution of insights from students, in a small way, helps direct the development of a collaborative plan toward the needs of students, who are ultimately impacted by their teachers' professional development work.

While these intuitions from participating teachers and impacted students are valuable, they do not represent the last word in the development of a collaborative plan at a particular site. In a real-life implementation scenario, data gathered formally could be supplemented by ongoing informal input from the teachers at the site, and could be expanded with additional data gathered from administrators, regional education officials,

and high school students. Even better, once participants are selected, they could provide more immediately pressing and individualized observations that could be integrated into the plan during development and while the collaboration is under way. Results like these should be construed as a stable foundation upon which meaningful cooperative work can be built, not as a fixed picture of site conditions. The work of an educator and a scholar, as always, requires constant adaptivity and receptiveness to new information.

Chapter 5: Research-Based Collaborative Plan

Introduction: Twin Towns and Twin Teachers

The global situation in the middle 20th century that called into existence the first "twin towns" or "sister cities" relationships, which provide the grounding metaphor for the collaborative plan presented here, was one of increased cultural flattening and spreading exposure to new and different ideas among a broader representation of people than, for instance, those wealthy aristocrats who could afford to take a "Grand Tour" of Europe for cultural edification in the 17th and 18th centuries. The standard human condition of cultural isolation determined by geography and lack of educational achievement continued to erode as the dissemination of information increased through print (and later, electronic) media and human movement. While it is not fair to characterize earlier periods as static - during one earlier period (the 1500s and 1600s), historian Carl Bridenbaugh notes that people, at least in England, were in flux at all levels of society - it must be said that these movements were limited in scope: "we cannot stress too often the small scale of existence in the seventeenth century...civil society was little more than a congeries of many very small units" (Bridenbaugh 29).

The difference, in the 19th and 20th centuries, is that the scope expanded dramatically. People embraced change in pursuit of progress, but the opportunity to escape from economic privation, experience different expressions of humanness, and embrace a fuller development of human capabilities was challenged, on the other hand, by the disintegration of social and familial ties, a loss of certainty in belief about how the world worked, and by

the increased potential for human exploitation that could be easily hidden away in an "invisible" part of the world as economies became more globally oriented. In short, change, as it always does, can create the potential for opportunity in an atmosphere of uncertainty.

This is the environment in which the first international municipal partnerships (i.e. "twin towns" or "sister cities") were forged. Unfortuntely, exposure to cultural diversity can sometimes lead to a reactive focus on the social connections that solidify bonds within a cultural group while excluding those on the outside (called "bonding" social capital, versus "bridging", in Robert Putnam's influential late 1990s study *Bowling Alone*) in response to the uncertainty of change. Such attitudes do not always lead to intolerable social dysfunction, but at their absolute worst, combined with other pressures, such attitudes can fuel events like the destruction demonstrated in the World Wars in the early 20th century. So, the first town partnerships grew out of that milieu, intended to help heal the world after those wars, making positive use of the human tendency to identify with and conserve the familiar, leading participants to appreciate the different. These relationships were - and are - often forged through immigration links, similar size or cultural influence, or shared local industries. These similarities, through which people can build affinity using their "bonding" social capital, make it easier for each city to safely explore the ways in which they are different ("bridging"), gaining information and appreciation for a diverse expression of culture.

The following collaborative plan, then, adapts that concept and applies it to high school and college writing instructors. Unlike the conditions that prompted the development of sister cities, there is no significant cultural animus between these two groups of educators; most high school and college teachers are bighearted and willing to

work together when time and opportunity presents itself. However, several other conditions exist that create similar exigencies. Professional distinctions, social barriers, oversight, and slightly different emphases have created two silos of practice representing the cultural differences; students and the discipline of English provide the similarities through which individuals can create mutual understanding.

One Year: A Sustained Collaboration Addressing Practical and Theoretical Difference

This plan is built around a single academic year – from summer to summer – though there is nothing to prevent teachers from working together informally after the program concludes if their relationship is productive. The academic year is an accepted, naturalized time unit for educators, providing time for sustained work and keeping the scope of that work manageable. During the collaboration, participating educators will address aspects of professional cultural difference unfolding in a logical progression. First, instructors will address connections and differences related to immediate practice, which will allow them to meet on familiar ground and implement insights right away. These practical differences include assignments and pedagogical approaches; such a focus keeps the attention on the student, which is the principal yoke that holds all educators together. In the second semester, the collaborators will focus more on themselves and their identities as educators; having established a basis of student-centeredness, they should be able to discuss their own concerns while keeping students at the forefront. The collaborators will reflect in writing throughout the course of the program, and during the summer following the second

semester, these reflections will be distilled into a brief summary that would be shared with other collaborators and even non-participating teachers. There would be twenty-four half-hour sessions of direct collaboration each semester (twelve hours of contact time) with an estimated half-hour of preparation and follow-up time for each session, for a total of twenty-four hours of professional development work during the academic year, not counting the orientation and summer writing workshop.

In Chapter 1, some potential topics for exploration were presented that could be modified based on local needs; those topics included writing prompts, writing topics, assessment of writing, qualities of college-level writing, student needs, disciplinary values, professional discourse, training and education requirements, administration and oversight, and social perception. Based on the results of the data from surveys and interviews gathered in this project, the topics and guiding questions chosen for this particular plan are described below (see Fall: Connections of Practice and Spring: Connections of Theory & Professional Environment). The instructions under each topic below are written as if they were instructions given to participants, with the use of second person pronouns.

Summer: Pairing Teachers; Orientation

The Twin Teachers effort will begin by soliciting willing participants from a given area. Ideally, the institutions involved would provide professional development support for participants, but one of the premises of the program is that it can be organized and implemented by teachers in the absence of support. Mutual understanding of diverse experiences and practices are fundamental to the underlying values of this project, so no attempt will be made to match teachers by personality traits or professional ideology;

instead, they will be randomly sorted[38]. While there will be no tracking, there will be a preliminary assessment of needs and values to provide a basis for discussion. This needs assessment instrument is based on a combination of the survey that was distributed to teachers during the research portion of this project and the underlying theoretical framework of discourse communities and communities of practice described in Chapter 2. There is a version for high school and college English teachers; the preliminary needs assessment can be found in Appendix H.

In order to limit the time commitment and maximize the physical time for direct collaboration among educators, the orientation to the project will be short and electronically mediated through an email and a video. Screencast videos will be provided to help participants get acquainted with the necessary digital technology (see Logistics, below). The orientation materials will describe the purpose of the project, outline the approach, describe the expected time commitment, give dates and times for planning purposes, and provide any necessary disclosures required by school administration or Institutional Review Boards. Furthermore, collaborators should plan to save all written reflections in one place so they can draw on their insights during the summer writing workshop following the academic year. Participants will sign a commitment document that will also include privacy protections for students when classroom materials are shared and guidelines for the ownership and authorship of published work derived from the project.

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[38] Any sorting method would suffice, from a random number generator to paper slips in a bowl. In some cases, there may be only two willing collaborators in a given area; this plan should scale down easily to accommodate them.

Fall: Connections of Practice

Many approaches to learning begin with an exploration of theory before inviting students to apply that theory to their practice: theory precedes practice. This plan, however, reverses the expectation, recognizing that the participants are already well-versed practitioners in their domains of expertise. Collaborating teachers do not need to be grounded in theory; rather, they begin by investigating issues that have an immediate bearing on their classroom work and relationships with their students. Insights can be applied right away. Then, having established an environment of emphasis on students and teaching, participants can transition to theoretical conversations in the spring semester.

Topics for the fall semester are built on the theoretical framework (communities of practice; college-level writing) and the results of the surveys and interviews. Significant areas of inquiry drawn from the surveys and interviews include the difference in writing prompts and topics (identified by students as differing between high school and college), differences in the "genre" of planning artifacts like syllabi and lesson plans, issues of student time management and motivation (by far the areas of greatest concern to surveyed students), and assessment differences (assessment is identified as a challenging topic by educators in the short narrative answers of the surveys and in the interviews). After the initial in-person meeting, which would take place in August, there would be twelve half-hour meetings during the fall semester, with each month carrying a theme: "Planning My Teaching", "Student Time Management", and "Assessment". Some preparatory work would be expected of participants, but it would not be particularly demanding.

SEPTEMBER: PLANNING MY TEACHING

For the theme of "Planning My Teaching", discussions would begin with the framework of understanding professional cultural differences through communities of practice (Wenger), then explore differences in writing (composition of prompts and student topic choice), concluding with a presentation of the artifacts of curriculum planning used by teachers, including syllabi and lesson plans, along with a dialogue about the stakeholders for whom these documents are produced.

- **Communities of Practice (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Review a one-sheet summary of Etienne Wenger's concept of communities of practice (Appendix H) that invites you to reflect on the ways that you engage with one another within your level of schooling, to define your "joint enterprise", and to consider how you use your repertoire of behaviors to work out your joint enterprise with one another.

  ▸ *Discussion*: Use the summary to explore the ways in which your communities of practice converge and differ, and how this impacts your teaching and your ability to understand one another.

  ▸ *Follow-Up*: Short, freewritten reflection on new understandings of the other teacher's community of practice.

- **Writing Prompts (½ hour)**:

  ▸ *Preparation*: Provide an example of writing prompts in two different genres to the other teacher for review.

  ▸ *Discussion*: Using the prompts provided, identify the areas in which students are given choices or imperatives – what are they allowed to do, and what must they

do? Discuss the types of genres that are privileged at each level of teaching and how teaching these genres helps meet standards, objectives, or other goals (like course objectives, student needs, etc.). Identify due dates, length requirements, and drafting requirements, and discuss why these assignment aspects are similar or different based on the goals of each teacher and school.

▸ *Follow-Up*: Write a brief reflection on the following question: "How would my typical writing assignments be different if I had no outside restraints on my teaching, like a lack of grading time, test preparation expectations, and so on. What kind of writing assignment would best help my students and why?"

- **Writing Topics (½ hour)**:

  ▸ *Preparation*: Make a short list of the topics upon which students write in the class. If students typically pick their own topics, name some typical topics chosen and list the constraints placed on them (e.g. limited by subject area, designated off-limits topics like religion or argumentative clichés).

  ▸ *Discussion*: Surveys indicate that a significant perceived difference between writing in high school and college involves independence in topic choice. Students believe, in general, that assignments in college require more independent input from them. Discuss why you, as a teacher, assign certain topics or allow student choice. How does this impact the quality of the work that students create? Does this impact the enthusiasm students have toward their assignments, and how? Is there a difference in emphasis between high school and college?

  ▸ *Follow-Up*: Email one another three redacted pieces of student writing on different topics along with the assignment prompt that guided the student during

the drafting process. Consider the ways in which the topic choice aspects guided the development of the essay, and follow up with questions if necessary.

- **Curricula, Syllabi, and Lesson Plans – Genres and Stakeholders (½ hour)**:

  ▸ *Preparation*: Send the other teacher an example of each: (1) A syllabus or other guiding document, (2) A lesson plan or lecture notes, whether or not it is in a finished state.

  ▸ *Discussion*: First, provide an oral narrative of how course curricula are developed and changed at each institution. Who is involved – teachers, committees, administrators, oversight agencies, students, parents, governing boards? Who has final approval? Which guidelines or standards documents govern the development of a course, and which organizations sponsor their development? Next, provide an oral narrative of how lessons or units in the course are developed by the teacher and who provides oversight. What constitutes oversight?

  ▸ *Follow-Up*: Short, freewritten reflection on the most obvious strength and deficiency of the way institutions on the "other side" develop curricula and lesson plans.

October: Student Time Management

For the theme of "Student Time Management", collaborators will discuss the foremost hindrance to success identified by first-year composition students at SCC and MSU. While complications resulting from student time mismanagement are often designated by teachers as a work ethic problem (and they are frequently correct in doing so), students usually receive no formal training in time management and do not learn those skills at home. Productive areas for discussion, then, relate to the balance a teacher should strike in

providing time management encouragement and training compared to the content and skill development demands that they must also address. Other related issues include the change in frequency and scope of writing assignments and student motivation – what is the mix of motivational strategies used by high school and college educators, and how do they differ?

- **Demands on student time (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Write a short response to the following prompt, providing examples: "What external factors keep my students from focusing on their work?"

  ▸ *Discussion*: Consider the factors that represent extracurricular demands on student time at the high school and college level. These factors will likely include work, family responsibilities, financial burdens, transportation issues, technology access, social activities, interface with school administration (e.g. advisement and financing in college), sports and games, hobbies, habits, parental supervision, and others. How do these differ for high school students and college students, especially since virtually all college students are legal adults, while most high school students are not? How do these factors feature in teaching choices?

  ▸ *Follow-Up*: Based on the discussion, write a short narrative of a distracting situation that a student might experience at your level of schooling (high school or college) that a student is not likely to experience at the other teacher's level of schooling. If you draw on a real-life experience, make sure to conceal the student's identity.

- **Productivity training (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Find an example of one concrete thing you do as a teacher to show your students how to manage time, stay organized, or meet deadlines.

▸ *Discussion*: Consider how teachers at your level of schooling, either in the classroom or at an institutional level, give students guidance in time management, organization, or allocation of work. This could include anything from a short lesson or unit in the classroom to an entire class that provides life skills, like the freshman orientation class at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (Neely-Streit). How does this change the focus on the content or skill objectives of the course? Are these efforts organized by the teachers (bottom-up) or by administrators (top-down), or by some combination?

▸ *Follow-Up*: Reflect in writing on the top productivity strategy that you believe would help your typical student and send to the other teacher by email.

- **Frequency and scope of writing (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Be prepared to discuss the typical volume of writing that you assign in a typical semester or school year along with the frequency of deadlines, including drafts. Revisit your assignment prompts if necessary.

  ▸ *Discussion*: Using assignment prompts as a basis, discuss the volume and frequency of writing assignments in your course. Should the volume and frequency be lower or higher? If it should be different, why, and what keeps you from making changes? Do your students meet your expectations, or do you have to adjust your expectations to meet their performance? Surveyed FYC students indicate that greater rigor and higher expectations in high school may have helped them better prepare for college. Discuss why your students might have provided this answer, whether or not you agree that it is realistic.

  ▸ *Follow-Up*: Freewrite on what you think the ideal amount of writing and number

of drafts for an assignment is; consider your reasoning, and share with your partner.

- **Carrots and sticks (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: On a piece of paper or in a word processor document, make two columns titled “Positive” and “Negative”. Quickly list the strategies you use to motivate your students to complete and excel in reading and writing assignments under each heading based on whether each one represents positive or negative reinforcement.

  ▸ *Discussion*: Surveyed students at SCC and MSU report a lack of motivation as a significant factor in their struggles with first-year composition. Before examining the lists, discuss the reason why you believe students have trouble getting motivated. Then, using your “Positive” and “Negative” lists as a basis, discuss the differences between your lists. Do the lists lean in a positive or negative direction, and why? Does it have to do with your students, something in your personality, or strategies acquired from experience? What are the features of your context (e.g. goals, oversight, your training) that lead you to choose certain strategies over others?

  ▸ *Follow-Up*: In writing, reflect upon the strategies in your “Positive” and “Negative” lists. As a rule, which motivations tend to be more effective? Why do you think this is the case? Share with your partner.

November: Assessment

Both survey and interview respondents in the MSU and SCC area identified standardized assessment pressures as a major difference between the high school and

college teaching experience, especially involving high-stakes examinations like college placement tests (ACT, SAT) and or tests to measure student achievement (PARCC in Illinois or K-PREP in Kentucky). While differences in standardized assessment are important, there are also other classroom assessment differences in play. For instance, there may be a difference in grading criteria – either objective or subjective – and the amount of feedback that can be given, based on teacher workload and types of assignments. For the theme of "Assessment", then, collaborators will spend half of the time on standardized assessment, since it is the most pervasive difference between high school and college, but they will also address the assessment of "college-level" writing (which invites a discussion on the qualities of college-level writing), assessment tools, and feedback strategies.

- **Standardized assessment; college (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: The college instructor should make a list of all standardized assessments that are mandated the college or by a state-level agency or accreditation agency, and should make note of the use of that examination (e.g. course placement, assessing student performance). Standardized examinations at the institution level can include a common writing assignment that is shared by an entire department and collected for use outside the classroom. The list should be sent to the high school teacher.

  ▸ *Discussion*: In this session, the college instructor will be doing most of the talking, discussing each of the standardized tests and their impact on the classroom. Impacts on the classroom should be conceived broadly, including the ways in which there is an influence on the kinds of students who are in a particular class (through course placement) and how standardized examinations are used for

course, department, or institutional evaluation, the results of which would influence an instructor's classroom decisions. The motivations of those requiring the examination should be considered. The high school teacher's role should involve asking follow-up questions of the college instructor.

▸ *Follow-Up*: The high school teacher should send the college instructor a short, freewritten reflection on his or her impressions of the importance and impact of standardized tests at the college level.

- **Standardized assessment; HS (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: The high school teacher should make a list of all standardized assessments that are mandated by a state-level agency or higher, and should make note of the use of that examination. Include college entrance exams like the ACT or SAT. The list should be sent to the college instructor.

  ▸ *Discussion*: In this session, the high school teacher will be doing most of the talking, discussing each of the standardized tests and their impact on the classroom. Impacts on the classroom should be conceived broadly, including the ways in which there is an influence on the kinds of students who are in a particular class (through class placement or testing out of a requirement), difference in assessment administration based on the needs of the student (e.g. learning disabilities, language proficiency) and how standardized examinations are used for course, department, or institutional evaluation, the results of which would influence an teacher's classroom decisions. The motivations of those requiring the examination should be considered. The college instructor's role should involve asking follow-up questions of the high school teacher.

▸ *Follow-Up*: The college instructor should send the high school teacher a short, freewritten reflection on his or her impressions of the importance and impact of standardized tests at the high school level.

- **Understanding college-ready writing (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Write a reflection on the following prompt: "In one sentence, describe the fundamental qualities of college-level writing". After writing the reflection, read the selection provided titled "College-Level Writing: Intentionally Rhetorical"[39] (see Appendix H).

  ▸ *Discussion*: Using the one sentence summaries, discuss the similarities and differences between your beliefs about college-level writing. If you had more than one sentence, how would you add nuance to your answer? How and from what sources did you develop your beliefs on college-level writing? Discuss the essay provided titled "College-Level Writing: Intentionally Rhetorical". Do you agree or disagree with the author's conclusions? Why or why not?

  ▸ *Follow-Up*: Together, write a one-sentence summary of the fundamental qualities of college-level writing using your own definitions and the ideas worked out during the discussion.

- **Rubrics and feedback (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Send to the other teacher a rubric or scoring sheet and a sample of student writing with feedback on (1) a first draft and (2) a final draft.

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[39] This selection is based on the section on college-level writing in Chapter 2, since it summarizes much of the recent literature on the qualities of college-level writing.

▸ *Discussion*: Each teacher should describe to the other the criteria used for grading based on the rubric that was sent before the session. Is the rubric holistic, providing a single scale with all criteria included, or analytic, dividing the scoring aspects into parts? Does each rubric appropriately target the mutual definition of college-level writing defined after the last session? Then discuss feedback, including limitations on time, how a teacher maintains a boundary between feedback and editing, how the feedback is received by students, and whether or not feedback is used in revision.

▸ *Follow-Up*: Select one set of criteria in the rubric that was submitted to the other teacher; rewrite it to better fit your understanding of college-level writing.

Spring: Connections of Theory & Professional Environment

Having engaged with several issues of teacher practice, from the planning and assessment of teaching to student motivation and time management, the collaborators would then move toward an in-depth investigation of theory and professional environment. A major characteristic of theory and professional environment involves how teachers communicate with one another, both formally, through initiation and enculturation into a discipline, and informally, through daily work conversations and other unofficial channels like blogs and social media sites. Together, these environs of communication are conceived as discourse communities, the discussion of which will kick off the spring semester.

Topics for the spring semester, building off of the concept of discourse communities, include institutions and stakeholders, where collaborators will consider guiding documents, administrative structures, and political involvement. After considering the nuts and bolts of the education systems in which they work, participants will reflect on

themselves as teachers, spending the month of April discussing student needs, philosophies, and ideologies, revisiting the definition of college-level writing that concluded the fall semester in the context of one's values.

February: Professional Discourse

For the theme of "Professional Discourse", participants will position the spring semester conversations in the various ways that teachers talk to one another. Discussions would begin with a brief review of discourse communities as described by John Swales, with each teacher making an effort to understand the ways, consciously and subconsciously, that educators communicate within their fields of practice, including important terms and an uncovering of the stakeholders involved in determining what kind of information gets through and why.

- **Discourse Communities (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Review a one-sheet summary of John Swales's explanation of discourse communities (Appendix H) that invites teachers to reflect on professional goals, to explore genres of communication used in their field, and to provide some examples of shared definitions as used in their practice.

  ▸ *Discussion*: Use the summary to discuss the ways in which their discourse communities converge and differ, and how this impacts their teaching and their ability to understand one another.

  ▸ *Follow-Up*: Short, freewritten reflection on new understandings of the other teacher's discourse community.

- **Communication amongst ourselves (½ hour)**

▸ *Preparation*: Revisit your answer to Question 2 in the one-sheet summary of discourse communities (Appendix H): “What genres are used in communication with other professionals in your field? Think broadly”.

▸ *Discussion*: Consider the means of communication used within your field, your field being “high school teachers/high school English teachers” or “college instructors/college English instructors”. Discuss the ways in which these means of disseminating information – formal and informal – converge and differ, and consider how the differences reflect the contrasts in values, goals, or professional history in each field. Discuss a genre or artifact used in one field that is unfamiliar to a teacher in another field.

▸ *Follow-Up*: Send the other teacher a sample of a genre unfamiliar to them for review (i.e. academic journal article, redacted Individualized Education Program document for a special education child).

- **Key terms (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Revisit your answer to Question 3 in the one-sheet summary of discourse communities (Appendix H): “List some examples of specialized definitions or jargon used in your field. Discuss the words that are unfamiliar to your partner”.

  ▸ *Discussion*: Terminology (that is, a “lexis”) is a fundamental part of defining a discourse community. Investigate one another’s lists and explore the ways in which each term has served to address a particular goal in your field. How does the use of these terms facilitate or impede communication (assuming they can do both)?

▸ *Follow-Up*: In writing, take an unfamiliar term from the other teacher's context and consider how it would be applied to your own. Does it add anything to your understanding of the phenomenon that it labels?

- **Who teaches us? (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: This session relates to the sixth "necessary" and "sufficient" quality for the existence of a discourse community according to Swales: a critical mass of experts with a mastery in the area of expertise. As Swales explains, "[d]iscourse communities have changing memberships; individuals enter as apprentices and leave...survival of the community depends on a reasonable ratio between novices and experts" (Swales 27). While one could object to his conclusion in some respects - it is the least developed of his six points, likely because of the near-impossibility of determining the appropriate ratio of novices and experts even after the discourse community is identified – it is nevertheless certain that participants are inducted into a discourse community and receive ongoing socialization as an act of give-and-take with one's peers. Before the session, reflect on the various "gatekeepers" who were involved with your initiation into and ongoing development with your discourse community (e.g. college professors, hiring committees, state licensing boards, professional societies/unions) and consider how they did and continue to communicate the essential knowledge of your discourse community to you. If it helps, make a list, naming some of those actors in your own development.

  ▸ *Discussion*: It is a well-established fact that the training trajectories for high school teachers and college professors differ (see the "professional initiation"

section above in Chapter 4 under the research question "Are Educators Aware of the Significant Differences..."). Reflecting again on the actors involved in your professional development, consider why these differences might exist, based on the goals and values prevalent in your practice, and discuss together who controls those practices of initiation (i.e. your training) and whether or not those practices are congruent with their stated goals.

▸ *Follow-Up*: Freewrite one positive and one negative aspect of your professional initiation, particularly regarding how those aspects make you a better teacher or scholar or keep you from being the best teacher or scholar you can be.

March: Institutions and Stakeholders

For the theme of "Institutions and Stakeholders", collaborators will transition from their experiences in professional initiation to those forces which serve on an ongoing basis to mold one's practice. These forces include the national or regional bodies who provide guidance and recommend best practices (e.g. NCTE, CWPA), state regulatory bodies, and school administrations. These influential groups or individuals differ for high school teachers and college instructors in configuration and relative importance, and collaborators will consider how these authorities limit and shape teaching and scholarship.

- **Standards and objectives documents (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Send the other teacher an example of an influential objectives document used in your practice. For college instructors, this may include the *WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition*, a state-level articulation document, or a department-wide set of objectives. For high school teachers, this may include a selection from the Common Core State Standards or another state-

level planning document. Read the document that is sent to you.

▸ *Discussion*: Identify the similarities and differences between your standards and objectives documents. Consider how your goals align with one another and how they fail to fit together. How do your classroom practice and student outcomes differ from the ideals described in these documents, and why?

▸ *Follow-Up*: Identify a gap in your chosen objectives document, either from an important objective that is excluded or a misalignment with real life practice, and reflect briefly in writing on how you would address this deficiency.

- **Standards and objectives in the classroom (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: In the previous session, you discussed how classroom practices differ from the ideals described in standards and objectives documents. List two classroom practices that you use to address the standards and objectives documents, and two classroom practices that you retain in spite of the fact that they do not directly address the goals described in those documents. Send your list to the other teacher.

  ▸ *Discussion*: Discuss at length your classroom practices. Walk through a typical "day in the life" of your class, and note the influences that standards and objectives have on your practice. How does your typical classroom day differ?

  ▸ *Follow-Up*: Reflect on the following question: "How do I communicate course goals to my students in a way that they can understand?"

- **Administrative differences (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Find an organizational chart for your institution and send it to the other teacher. When you receive the organizational chart from the other teacher,

make note of administrative roles that you do not understand.

▸ *Discussion*: Begin the discussion by explaining the job description (as you understand it) of the administrative roles noted in the preparation activity to one another. Then, discuss the relationship that each of you have with your administrators and explain how they are involved in your everyday practice. What kind of oversight and support do they provide, and what mechanisms do they use to exercise their influence? Describe the process for resisting or modifying an administrative practice at your institution.

▸ *Follow-Up*: Write a thank you note to an administrator at your institution (not meant to be sent, unless you want to). The purpose is to uncover the value (or, in some cases, the lack of value) that a particular administrator or role adds to the education process. Send your note to the other teacher with any necessary annotations to help them understand unknown aspects of your professional environment.

- **Political pressures (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: All forms of public education are influenced by politics; for instance, higher education governing boards are often appointed by state governors or elected, and state legislatures are involved in influencing curriculum. These examples do not even begin to address issues of funding. Teacher pay and funding inequity are heated topics in many states, and decreasing state appropriations are often implicated as one of the factors in college tuition increases and growth of the percentage of overall teaching workload carried by contingent faculty. In advance of the meeting, consider how your context is shaped by the political process.

▸ *Discussion*: After discussing the political influences on your practice at each level of schooling, explain how you or other teachers collectively engage with that political process. How do you accede to or resist politically-driven changes, and what groups are you involved with that give you a political voice? How are your students involved in the political aspects of public education?

▸ *Follow-Up*: Reflect in writing on how your institution is funded and how the distribution of funds is prioritized within the institution. Send your reflection to the other teacher.

April: Values and Teaching Philosophy

The final theme is "Values and Teaching Philosophy", which represents an attempt to allow the teachers to tie together the insights from their collaboration with an exploration of their own beliefs about teaching and writing. Beliefs are important to uncover because of the way in which they serve as unperceived influences on crucial teaching and vocational decisions. People often believe things unreflectively, and further deliberation would provide an opportunity to amend inconsistencies and unedifying features of those beliefs. This is one of the rationales, for instance, of requiring a teacher to produce a teaching philosophy as a part of the training process or requiring a professor to write a philosophy reflection for the tenure application. Given that this plan maintains a focus on the needs of students, collaborators would begin with a session on student needs. Then, they would revisit the qualities of college-level writing – this representing one of the major areas of identified difference between high school teachers and college instructors at the study sites – concluding with a reflection on teaching philosophy and underlying beliefs and values.

- **Student needs (½ hour)**

▸ *Preparation*: Many teachers at the study sites expressed a concern for meeting student needs; one interviewee even juxtaposed fulfilling student needs with the strategies the school and state governing bodies use to assess performance and maintain consistency; that is, there was a perceived misalignment between the school's emphasis on test preparation and real student needs. Write a short list of what you believe your students need from the education they receive in your class (or if necessary, from your school).

▸ *Discussion*: Begin the session by reflecting upon your list of student needs. These lists represent your perception; how do you think your students would describe their needs? In what ways does your class or institution fulfill those needs or otherwise fall short? Are there differences in your assessment of student needs? What are they? What would you change to better meet student needs? Are there purposes for your school other than meeting student needs, and what are they?

▸ *Follow-Up*: Reflect in writing about one way your work serves to fulfill student needs, and consider whether or not you discovered this before or after you became a teacher.

- **What is college-level writing? (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Find the reflection you wrote following the session on "Understanding college-ready writing" where you mutually crafted a one-sentence summary of the fundamental qualities of college-level writing using your own definitions and the ideas worked out in discussion. Reread this summary and consider the ways in which your beliefs as a teacher informed the qualities named

in that summary.

▸ *Discussion*: Start by discussing the ways in which your beliefs as a teacher informed the qualities named in your summary. Pay close attention to the language you use to express your beliefs. Identify key words that you use in expressing yourself, and make note in writing of these key words as you speak. For instance, if you identify “reader-oriented” as a quality of college-level writing, and then added the statement in discussion, “I believe writing is an important means of negotiating conflict among people, so a high-level writer should be able to step outside of themselves, to be empathetic toward others, even when they disagree with them”, you might write the terms “negotiating conflict” or “empathy” as some of the key words of your beliefs. Close the session by discussing the extent to which you believe your own students are able to fulfill the aspirations in the summary you wrote together in the fall semester. If they were able to meet those aspirations, would the resulting skills help them fulfill their needs?

▸ *Follow-Up*: Send the identified key words list from the session to the other teacher, adding a short reflection on how those words have revealed something important about your beliefs or the way you talk about them. Annotate a key word if it is necessary for understanding.

- **Teaching philosophy (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: If you have ever been asked to write a “teaching philosophy” or another similar document during your education or career, find that document, review it, and send it to the other teacher. If you have not written such a document, write a one-paragraph summary of your teaching philosophy and send it

to the other teacher. If you need a model, ask one of your colleagues.

▸ *Discussion*: Start the session by answering the question "Why did I become a teacher?" This anchors the discussion of a teaching philosophy in a real-life story. Then, in turn, explain your teaching philosophy as it relates to beliefs about academic discipline, engagement with course material, learning, objectives, student needs, pedagogical methods, and assessment of your effectiveness as a teacher, and your own professional goals. How do your philosophies differ, and why?

▸ *Follow-Up*: Does your teaching philosophy (either pre-written or composed as a paragraph in the preparation phase) address issues of academic discipline, engagement with course material, learning, objectives, student needs, pedagogical methods, and assessment of your effectiveness as a teacher, and your own professional goals? If not, modify this document to include these important aspects of philosophy and send the modified statement to the other teacher.

- **Summer writing workshop preparation (½ hour)**

  ▸ *Preparation*: Make sure you have all of the written reflections you have produced before, during, and after the sessions. This will provide the raw material for your work in the summer writing workshop.

  ▸ *Discussion*: The goal of this collaborative effort has been to increase the transfer of information between the silos of practice that high school English teachers and college writing instructors inhabit. The important differences between you as

teachers have been described as “cultural” differences, “culture” being defined as the practices, philosophies, social customs, and way of life of a group of people, which is expressed through cooperation with or resistance to those aspects of culture. Throughout, the focus has been ultimately on the student: how does a better understanding of the conditions in another level of schooling help you understand and serve your students more effectively? Discuss those aspects of culture you have learned about one another: how does your teaching (and scholarship, if applicable) reflect the community of practice in which you work? What are your beliefs and where did they come from? How do educators talk to one another within your field, whether professionally or socially? Which cultural customs in your field do you stand in resistance to as a teacher, and what motivates you to do so? How will you act to change your teaching in the future to reflect your increased understanding of teaching and learning conditions in high school or college? Feel free to allow this conversation to develop naturally, but keep a focus on students and cultural differences, since this will comprise the substance of the reflection you will write together in the summer writing workshop.

▸ *Follow-Up*: Together, write a one sentence main idea that binds together your insights and prepares you to synthesize your written material in the summer writing workshop.

Summer: Reflection

By the end of the spring semester, the collaborating educators will have engaged in roughly twenty-four hours of work focused on mutual cultural understanding, with twelve

hours of direct contact time. This fulfills the individual need of the teachers to understand one another, meeting one of the important goals of the project: using individual connections to provide a low-cost, incremental path to professional improvement in writing instruction that can be implemented in a context lacking in large-scale institutional support. However, this is a regional effort that is meant to bring together educators on a larger scale; the intention is that several collaborations would be underway at one time to allow the participants to draw upon one another as a resource if necessary. Furthermore, each set of collaborators, based on personality, professional history, and philosophy, will produce a different relationship. Consequently, there may be some insights created by one partnership that are missed by another. Finally, it is important for writing teachers to write, which hones their skills, allows them to better understand what they are asking students to do, and is associated with better outcomes for students: for instance, one study of the National Writing Project found a positive association between a more prolific teacher writing life and strength of student writing samples (Whyte et al.). These points provide the rationale for the summer writing workshop which would follow the academic year in which the collaborative work occurs; all of the collaborating teachers in an area would have the chance to come together, reduce their insights to writing, and share their work for the benefit of other teachers.

The writing workshop, as envisioned here, would be a one-day, in-person event lasting six to eight hours. Since the teachers involved have been writing less polished work throughout the year, and have developed a “main idea” sentence in the last session, most of the writing work in the workshop will involve synthesizing already-written thoughts into a polished and presentable form that represents the mutual creative work of both teachers.

The location of the workshop itself would depend on available facilities, which would include a computer lab and internet access for writing.

Structurally, the workshop would begin with a brief introduction by a coordinator to ensure participants stay focused on the main idea: identification and mutual understanding of the conditions of professional culture in another level of schooling directed toward understanding and serving students more effectively. Each pair of teachers is likely to have a different set of artifacts, so there is no single format. However, the coordinator would describe the qualities of the intended written product: a polished, reflective piece of writing that connects the insights from the collaboration and represents the substantial contribution of both teachers. Whether the writing takes the form of an expository essay, personal reflection, or argumentative work directed toward a change in teaching conditions, it should address these fundamental aspects of teaching culture that were discussed in the final April session: how does our teaching and scholarship reflect the communities of practice in which we work? What are our beliefs and where did they come from? How do we talk to one another within our fields, professionally and socially? Which cultural customs in our fields do we resist, and what motivates us to do so? How will we act to change our teaching in the future to reflect our increased understanding of teaching and learning conditions in high school or college? The last guiding question is particularly important since it represents the participants' action plan: what are the concrete changes that will be made either in individual teaching practices or professional advocacy as a result of this collaborative work? Participants will be encouraged to structure their time and render their final product in a shareable format (e.g. PDF). At the end of the session,

participants will share their work with one another (depending on local preferences, this could involve sharing on an electronic drive or binding printed copies).

After the final products are shared, participants would be encouraged to read all of the written work and to make a plan for ongoing cooperation with their partners if they believed it would be productive. Furthermore, these written reflections could be shared with other teachers in the area and used to promote another year of collaborations with a new set of teachers.

Qualities of Collaboration

This plan, as presented, exhibits many of the qualities of an effective collaboration described in Chapter 2: frequent contact, intentionality, clear articulation of values and goals, joint preparation of materials, and professional equality. While the presence of these qualities does not guarantee that a particular effort will succeed, they do fit with previously identified effective practices for collaborations and provide the conditions that distinguish collaboration from other forms of professional development. Ultimately, success depends on the teachers involved and their willingness and ability to commit time and mental resources to their partner and the process. There is no checklist of qualities that can substitute for engagement, commitment, and follow-through.

Frequent Contact

The amount of sustained communication in the program should be sufficient to allow participants to maintain a line of inquiry and follow up on ongoing concerns; this is not a "one and done" professional development effort. A weekly check-in keeps the other teacher a present and active part of each participant's working life. In addition to promoting

sustained inquiry, the accountability structure means that, even when participants fail to fulfill their commitments, they have an opportunity to consider why they failed and create the conditions for success in the future.

Intentionality

By design, this effort is not accidental; it is planned from the start to achieve specific ends: the penetration of cultural barriers between teachers to promote the success of students and an increase in professional satisfaction. Intentionality is exhibited throughout, from the planning process that investigates the needs of a particular site thoroughly, to the assessment of the individual needs and perceptions of participants, to the logically arranged progression of topics, to the reflection process that gives teachers something tangible to take away from their efforts at the end of each session and at the end of the collaboration through the summer writing workshop.

Clear Articulation of Values and Goals

Not only are the goals defined and targeted; they are clearly articulated to participants. If a teacher is not interested in breaking down cultural barriers with other educators, or if they have an ideology that prevents them from accepting the underlying assumptions of the effort, this clear articulation of goals and values should allow them to determine that another type of professional development may work better for them. While it is hard to envision an educator that does not emphasize the development of students (most of those teachers wash out quickly), the phenomenon does happen, especially among college professors in disciplines where research productivity and funding awards are emphasized more than they tend to be in the humanities. These values are communicated

clearly, allowing each participant to assess their own fit, creating an environment where participants are self-selected to succeed.

Joint Preparation of Materials

While the preparation of the plan and guiding materials for this collaboration are not prepared jointly (for the simple fact that other teachers would not be involved until the plan is actually implemented), the plan is guided by input from teachers on both sides of the educational divide through the surveys and interviews. Additionally, the collaboration itself provides an opportunity for participants to modify their own classroom materials together and to produce a collective reflection. While the sharing of pre-prepared materials is certainly a part of this collaboration – some cultural differences express themselves in curriculum design – there is an opportunity to modify those materials at the same time. Finally, there is nothing to prevent a group of teachers from modifying this plan collaboratively to fit a different context; in fact, it is encouraged.

Professional Equality

Professional equality is one of the principal values underlying this plan. The sense that both participants in each collaborative group have a domain of expertise and something to contribute to the other is fundamental to the success of the plan. Even though the goal, in a sense, is to help teachers guide students to competency in college-level writing – thereby seeming to place the work more firmly in the province of college English instructors – the survey results indicate that both kinds of teachers value the goal of college-level writing and understand how it should be defined. Therefore, this work is equally relevant for teachers of high school and college writing, and the focus on college-level writing does not violate the principle of professional equality.

Logistics

Any effort presents logistical puzzles, and failure to address them can stall a project. Outlining expectations before the project starts helps teachers make the best use of their time, avoiding delays and conflict. Some of these questions are technological, involving both the availability and training: are the tools available to teachers, and can the teachers use them without an undue burden? Some questions are administrative; any time institutions collaborate, there may be different processes and channels of communication for gaining approval, obtaining funds, reserving meeting space, and other issues. Further, some teachers will want the time they spend collaborating to count toward their required professional development hours. Finally, some logistical questions are legal. These questions will be addressed through a commitment agreement that is simple to read and still provides a written record of expectations. As elsewhere in this chapter, the planned approach is most appropriate for the chosen site but could be adapted for other locations.

Technology

In this plan, G-Suite products (Gmail, Google Hangouts, Google Calendar, Google Drive; Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides, and Google Forms) are chosen as the collaborative tools since both colleges in the study site use them. Additionally, four of the six selected high schools use G-Suite products (Anna-Jonesboro, Graves County, Massac County, and Vienna). Calloway County and Marshall County use Microsoft Office 365 products, which means that these teachers would have to use personal Google accounts to access the collaboration materials. For training, screencasts would be recorded and

distributed with the orientation materials to help teachers use the necessary features, likely Gmail and Google Hangouts, Calendar, Drive, Docs, and Forms.

IRB/Institutional Approval

Since this project involves human subjects and is sited at a college or university, Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval would likely be required in addition to administrative approval. This is especially the case if participants would reserve the opportunity to produce publishable material from the project[40]. MSU would require IRB approval, and SCC would require approval from the Director of Institutional Research[41], and this process would, in turn, require an approval letter from each participating high school. This process would begin in the spring semester preceding the academic year in which the collaboration would be held to allow sufficient time for IRB training and school approvals.

Additionally, administrators and teachers would want to apply their work in this program toward state-mandated teacher requirements for professional development hours, considering the many hours that would be devoted to collaboration throughout the year.

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[40] There is an ongoing discussion as to whether or not IRB approval should be sought for "teacher research" or "action research" since, among other things, the results are not generalizable given certain narrow definitions of the term. In fact, regulations from the US Department of Health and Human Services specifically exempt from IRB approval research "conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings [including] most research on regular and special education instructional strategies, and research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods" (CFR §46.104.d.1), because of the low risk to participants. However, it is important to consult with the specific IRB for guidance, and it is safer to have approval if the coordinator of the program hopes to disseminate the resulting data in any form. Finally, the process does ensure that the project conforms to generally accepted ethical practices for working with human subjects.

[41] The existence of Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) are usually connected to the receipt of Federal research funding; since community colleges do not typically engage in Federally-funded human subjects research, they do not have IRBs, as a rule. However, two-year colleges almost always have an administrative procedure for approving research.

Since the effort conceived in this plan has sites in multiple states (Illinois and Kentucky), a procedure would be followed in each state to ensure the teachers' work counts as professional development. Both Illinois and Kentucky require an average of twenty-four professional development hours per year for teachers[42]; below is the process for gaining approval for the Twin Teachers project in each state.

ILLINOIS

In Illinois, public school districts and community colleges are automatically approved by state statute as providers of teacher professional development (Illinois State, *Illinois State Professional Development* 1); however, professional development activities must meet certain requirements. Professional development hours, then, could be awarded under the auspices of each participating school, or the project could be centralized as a professional activity through SCC. Evidence would need to be provided to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) that the activity aligns with the 2011 Standards for Professional Learning published by Learning Forward (Illinois State, *Illinois State Professional* 3; Learning Forward), and a written rationale would need to be provided to the ISBE that the activity aligns with state teaching and learning standards. Submissions spend up to six weeks in review in addition to the time spent on preparation (Illinois State, "Educator Licensure"), so it would need to begin early in the spring semester before the start of the program.

[42] More specifically, Illinois requires completion of "120 hours of PD each 5-year renewal cycle" (Illinois State, *License Renewal*) and Kentucky envisions "four (4) days of the minimum school term for professional development and collegial planning activities for the professional staff without the presence of students" (*Kentucky Revised Statutes 158.070.3.a*).

KENTUCKY

Kentucky state statutes require that four days of the annual school term be used for professional development activities (*Kentucky Revised Statutes 156.095*; *Kentucky Revised Statutes 158.070*); the Commonwealth's approach is integrated with and centered upon each school's improvement plan (*Kentucky Administrative Regulations 704 3:035*). The Twin Teachers effort, then, would need to be incorporated into the school's improvement plan, probably as an instance of "flexible professional development" whereby the school district can "award professional development credit for any experience that addresses the goals of the school, the goals of the district improvement plan, or the individual professional growth plans of teachers" (*Kentucky Administrative Regulations 704 3:035.4.8*). Again, since the process requires coordination with the school's improvement plan development process, implementation would need to begin early in the spring semester before the start of the program or prior.

COMMITMENT DOCUMENT

In order to create a basic understanding of expectations among participants, a commitment document (see Appendix H) would be required for all collaborators. While it is impossible to anticipate all of the ways that a collaborative effort may fail, some of the most obvious problem areas are easy to identify. The commitment document addresses some of the most basic legal concerns for the organizer and for underwriting schools; it also describes the attitudes that participants need to have toward their work and their partners. Though it is a legal document, it is intentionally written in a way that avoids intimidating legal language, and its length is limited to one page in order to further avoid intimidation. Areas of concern addressed in the commitment document are:

- **Prioritization**: Each participant commits to "[p]rioritize my involvement in discussions and reflections"; the purpose is to avoid the classic group work problem where one participant can end up carrying the bulk of the weight for the group. This phenomenon is common among students; teachers are human, too, and may be subject to the same pressures.
- **Attitude**: Since professional equality is one of the fundamental underlying values of the plan, participants commit to "[t]reat my partner and other program participants with respect and tolerance" and "[a]ssume professional equality with other participants, recognizing their expertise in areas of practice that may differ from my own". While most participants will have no trouble behaving with professionalism and respect, the fact that the collaboration brings out cultural differences between different kinds of teachers invites the possibility that a participant may have genuine concerns about the advisability or effectiveness of a certain practice; the reminder to behave with tolerance and respect, recognizing the boundaries of each participant's expertise, should help the collaborators maintain focus.
- **Use of Time**: Participants commit to "[m]ake a good-faith effort to ensure that our collaboration time contributes to my professional development as a teacher". This commitment addresses the concerns of administrators who are giving their endorsement to this effort as professional development and documents that the teachers have been made aware of their own responsibilities.
- **Privacy**: Basic professional ethics and IRB mandates demand attention to privacy concerns for participating teachers and the students whose classwork may be shared during the course of the collaboration. The three privacy provisions in the

commitment document protecting the personally identifying information of participants and students supplement the privacy disclosures that would typically be required through the IRB, giving notice to the teachers of their privacy responsibilities.

- **Ownership of Materials and Authorship of Publishable Work**: Participants agree to "[s]hare equal ownership and authorship with my partner for any publishable materials resulting from our collaboration", short-circuiting any potential conflict over ownership and authorship, and providing an additional inducement to prioritize involvement. It does not address the order of authorship since it is impossible to predict the contribution and professional needs of the participants; hopefully, they would have a positive enough working relationship to negotiate a solution according to their needs.

Finally, the commitment document allows teachers to withdraw from participation at any time, ensuring that the effort remains voluntary, but the provisions relating to privacy, ownership, and authorship survive withdrawal to protect students and other participants.

Conclusion

Like the town-twinning pacts to which this plan corresponds, success depends on commitment. Many sister cities arrangements have stumbled because of the inability or unwillingness of the participating municipalities to commit to the relationship. Sometimes, this failure is due to funding – towns of any size experiencing budget constraints may not have the resources to allocate to travel and events promoting the relationship. This has a parallel in the teaching world; teachers often must marshal their own resources when

budget lines for even the smallest professional investments are set to zero. At one of the study sites, for instance, new contingent faculty have to contact publishers for free books since the college does not provide funding to buy teacher's editions. In other cases, failure occurs because of the vacancy left by a particularly energetic or charismatic participant. In a sister cities arrangement, there may be a mayor or government official that enthusiastically supports the relationship with the other city; when that representative resigns or dies, their work ends with them since there is no one else with the enthusiasm to carry it on. This also has a correspondence in the teaching world – how many improvement efforts, from high school visitation programs to regional conferences, have ended when those remaining did not see the value in continuing that work? Finally, there are partnerships that cease to continue when the circumstances that made them meaningful no longer apply. For sister cities, picture two towns that are connected by a common immigration/emigration heritage, like a city in the United States with a large Italian-American population that is paired with a city in Italy from which many of the immigrants originally came. These cities may have started with a strong connection, but if economic and social changes were to gradually disperse the Italian community in the American city, there may no longer be a sustainable Italian heritage there to hold the partnership together. Likewise with teachers; if the cultural landscape were to change, perhaps as a result of dual-credit programs, renewed emphasis on alignment between high schools and colleges, or other concerted efforts to reduce cultural differences between the two levels of schooling, there may no longer be a reason to collaborate under that pretext.

However, that is not the case as it exists today. This plan has been designed to address some of those potential sources of failure. For instance, the plan is meant to be implemented

in a context with minimal funding. Furthermore, the plan assumes a cultural difference between high schools and colleges that has been found to exist in fact. It is sensible, then, to make use of the bonding social capital that connects educators as teachers and scholars so they can productively bridge those areas where they still do not understand one another. This plan provides one approach that can be used as a pattern in a multiplicity of contexts to address meaningful differences in professional culture that, with a measure of commitment and sustained attention, has the potential to improve conditions for teachers and students alike.

Chapter 6: Conclusions, Discussions, and Suggestions for Future Research

Intentions

As explained in previous chapters, the purpose of this collaborative plan was to target the cultural differences between high school and college English instructors, examining culture as an expression of the practices, philosophies, and customs of a group of people. These differences, for English educators, are expressed through teaching strategies, terminology, beliefs, oversight, working conditions, professional identification, objectives, attitudes toward students, and attitudes toward coworkers, among other things.

Those cultural differences are not necessarily a problem in themselves. Sometimes they become troublesome when they come between students who want to learn and a teacher who wants to teach them; for instance, with a first-generation college student who never learned college student expectations at home, taught by teachers in high school who were under pressure to teach a certain narrow approach to test-directed writing, who then struggles in a college composition course where the instructor has an idiosyncratic approach to the use of basic terms and genres and divides blame between the student's work ethic and his high school teachers for his lack of "preparedness".

However, in other cases, those cultural differences can support practices that serve to address real diverging purposes between high schools and colleges. Public American high schools have a mandate rooted in broad community sentiment, politically obligated to provide a universal general basic education, serving all students in a narrowly delineated area, including those with learning disabilities, behavioral issues, and severe socioeconomic

limitations. There is also an aspiration – quite unevenly attained - that a public high school education should be fungible, or basically similar wherever a student lives. High schools are almost entirely student focused, with an emphasis on preparation.

Colleges, on the other hand, even publicly funded ones, offer a more bespoke experience, promoting distinctives such as class sizes, faculty credentials, student aid, quality of programs and majors, connections with potential employers, and extracurriculars. College students must pay for tuition and books, and, significantly, colleges serve independent legal adults. Colleges are not expected to provide the same educational and social experience at most times and in most places. Colleges are more structured around disciplinary knowledge and are involved in the training of graduate students along with undergraduates. Finally, as a system, higher education in the United States is involved in the generation of new knowledge along with its dissemination, which often requires a set of priorities from faculty that is not entirely student focused.

All of these variations require the cultivation of slightly different cultures; these differing aspects may be appropriate for the ends toward which they are directed, but still may present challenges for educators and students alike when there is a failure to communicate the relative importance of those institutional goals. A person who believes that the entire purpose of a state university is realized in undergraduate training, or does not understand the importance of high-stakes standardized testing at high schools, for example, will not fully appreciate the cultures that exist within those schools, and may believe something is “wrong” when those behaviors and beliefs are, in fact, soundly directed toward the ends that exist. Perhaps there are arguments for changing those ends, but that

is not the same conversation as the one involving mutual understanding between levels of schooling.

As a result, the purpose of this project was not to challenge cultural differences between English educators in high schools and colleges, except insofar as the participants would be led to challenge cultural differences themselves as a product of their discussions. If there are going to be cultural differences, however, there should also be open communication between the levels of schooling so that the teachers can align their work when alignment is called for, and so they can articulate the misalignment if it is needed to fulfill the real distinctions between the tasks at hand in secondary and post-secondary education.

Given that goal, this project met at least one important purpose: determining the qualities and extent of the cultural differences among English educators in high schools and colleges *in general* and *at a particular site*, providing models for the understanding of both. In the literature review, the cultural differences were historicized and examined through the lens of communities of practice and discourse communities, serving the dual purpose of defining and delimiting expressions of educator culture and providing a background for collaborating teachers to understand their own dissimilarities. Then, in the site-specific research, differences and similarities were uncovered through surveys and interviews; these conditions are discussed further below.

Finally, the principal purpose of the project was to develop a plan for an intentional, one-on-one collaborative effort that targets mutual cultural awareness between high school and college English instructors, supporting articulation for students moving from high school English to first-year composition, helping their instructors to improve their practice

by aligning expectations and understanding different professional environments. These goals were also met, at least insofar as the purpose was to develop a plan that fit the needs of a particular context. Context sensitivity, after all, is crucial, especially when professional culture is influenced by variables that deviate based on regional culture and political boundaries. The work of education is difficult to standardize even when disregarding the diverse political and sociocultural contexts in which students are actually educated since it involves individuals with differing values and wills in a society where individuality is notionally esteemed. Even when the conversation moves in the direction of standardization, as in the recently written symposium in *College Composition and Communication* (Gallagher et al.) exploring standardization in college writing programs, participants are careful to separate those aspects of teaching which benefit from sameness and those features for which sameness is actively destructive. As one contributor notes, "At the core of teaching and learning are human relationships, and at the core of human relationships are messy unpredictable interactions…[d]emocracy needs critical and creative thinkers, not drones who can take instruction from those in power" (Gallagher et al. 494). As a result, professional development for educators must always be more individualized than someone developing their skills in operating a fryer at a restaurant or preparing a tax return. Students are infinitely more variable than a fryer or a tax return, and teaching functions more in the realm of human relationships (like marriage, politics, parenting, or religious ministry) than following processes or operating a device. Professional development for educators must then be proportionally more sensitive to context than some other vocations, and the "preparation" phase must be extensive and individualized. This work provides a

model that, when applied to a different context, might have other outcomes based on the needs of educators at those sites.

Conditions Uncovered

Fortunately, surveys and interviews among educators did uncover several useful qualities of the professional culture and learning environment at the college and high school sites under consideration. These qualities represented differences between the cultures, but there were also important similarities, and, as discussed in the introduction to Chapter 5, similarities can be used to build affinity to bond educators together before they broach their differences. Finally, while the student surveys uncovered qualities of professional culture, they also provided insight as to what stresses first-year composition (FYC) students at the sites, which is also valuable in bonding teachers as they work toward their goals.

Differences in Professional Culture

Differences in professional culture were primarily expressed in professional oversight, or those structures designed to influence the content and practice of teaching like high-stakes standardized testing, and the comparative importance of standards and objectives documents. High school teachers appear to be more limited than college instructors in having an influence on their teaching environment since there are so many more overseers and monitoring mechanisms influencing the process. Unfortunately, this means that, when the test-directed preparation in high schools does not align with the writing valued in colleges, the teachers fail to understand one another when it comes to student preparedness, as was reflected in the results.

Additionally, participants only aligned in part on the question of goals; that is: what is the definition of "college-level writing" toward which both sets of English/language arts instructors should be aiming? While there was some overlap, high school teacher concerns were focused on building blocks of writing and formal correctness, while college instructor concerns were directed toward argument, rhetoric, and research. Most significantly, high school teachers left out rhetoric and audience concerns almost entirely, though it could be argued that audience consideration is implicit in, for instance, focus or a sense of purpose. However, the qualities of college-level writing represent an important distinction for the two cultures, especially since the question of goals is so fundamental.

Similarities in Professional Culture

In spite of the differences, there were important similarities. These similarities were most effectively expressed in the interviews since the participating teachers had a better chance to show themselves and their values. At these sites, it is notable that all four of the interview respondents were focused on the development and success of students, though they expressed their principles in varying ways. One respondent focused on career exploration, another on the development of the ability to work out a compromise, but the underlying theme was a sense of giving something to the student that they need. Another area of connection has to do with an emphasis on writing in both high school and college. The interview answers may have some bias toward writing because the respondents knew they were speaking to a college writing instructor, but there was no strong expression of the stereotype that high school English teachers are focused on the analysis of literature to the exclusion of all else while college instructors were only focused on producing written argumentative work. The high school teachers were familiar with their students' need to

learn writing and critical thinking skills, belying the perception that high school English and college composition is entirely unaligned. It appears that, at least at these sites, the need to focus too exclusively on test-directed writing is a greater factor in misalignment than the focus on literature over writing skills. Finally, and significantly for the purpose of this project, participants in both surveys and interviews agreed that, while there were few opportunities to collaborate across levels of schooling in their current social environment and among their professional development offerings, they believed that greater awareness of what happens on the other side would help them improve their teaching. This reflects, perhaps, a shared cultural understanding that collaboration is valuable; few participants felt like they were meant to be lone scholars or teachers, but rather, they felt that teaching is a negotiated social affair that benefits from more input from other skilled practitioners.

Student Struggles

Since many of the educators at the research sites were so student-centered, it was productive for the purpose of their collaboration to find out what the students were actually struggling with as they transitioned into FYC. Notably, these students, as explained, found the most significant challenges within themselves[43]. The top three difficulties were time management, motivation or interest in the work, and paper length or elaboration. The first two are not related to writing skills *per se*, but rather a lack of ability or inclination to prioritize coursework or connect their own existing interests and the more "academic" topics that would be valued by FYC instructors. However, some of the less common

[43] For more detail, refer to the graph on page 104 under "Describe the two most significant challenges you have personally experienced in your college composition classes".

struggles identified by students were also revealing. Many of these challenges are commonplace writing skill anxieties like grammar, citations, style, formatting, and handling English as a second language in a course where English is approached by default as a first language. However, some of the challenges hint at those cultural differences explored in Chapter 4; struggles with personal responsibility, knowledge of academic conventions, level of expected communication with instructors, and even reasoning strategies like the identification of logical fallacies reflect a culture that is focused on writing that engages with an ongoing conversation, and is thus social or audience directed. Though such writing often falls short of the values expressed in those aspects of college culture – perhaps even more often than it succeeds, considering all students – those students can perceive the articulation of cultural differences in their struggles. This was another significant condition uncovered at the research sites.

The resulting plan, then, was able to engage with those similarities, differences, and student-centered values to help educators at two traditionally separated levels of schooling interact with one another in a helpful way that is customized to a particular site. However, some of the significance of the plan derived from the way it can provide a model applicable to understanding and planning collaboration at other sites.

Applications

The immediate application of the plan in Chapter 5 is apparent: it could be implemented at Murray State University and Shawnee Community College together with willing high school faculty. Nevertheless, this work is more meaningful to other English educators if it can be used and applied to a different context. As explained, the purpose was

to create an intentional, one-on-one collaborative effort that focuses upon mutual cultural awareness between high school and college English instructors, and part of the "one-on-one" feature was intended to keep the scope manageable for teacher-led efforts at smaller schools or in regions with few financial resources. It is meant to be a significant step toward doing something productive that accounts for the needs of a site, and to help educators even make the case for future support from within an institution as an indicator that the participating teachers can be responsible for recognizing areas of ongoing professional development and reflection. The insights from the data collected in this project are not necessarily transferrable to another site – one of the most significant limitations of the study - and they become less applicable the more variables differ between these research sites and others. However, the approach itself is transferrable, since it simply reflects effective practices in gathering information from human subjects.

A Model for Understanding a Site

In other settings, participants and leaders can use the basic approach outlined in Chapters 3 through 5 to take the pulse of a particular educational environment, provide an analysis directed toward needs identification, and develop a collaborative agenda that addresses those needs in organized, reflective, relevant ways. A set of questions based on the research instruments in this study could be written and distributed combined with interviews to supplement the insights that are left underdeveloped due to the limitations of a brief survey question. The schedule and list of topics is flexible based on the availability of teacher time and the needs identified; in the introduction, a list of potential topics was provided (prompts, writing topics, writing assessment, qualities of college-level writing, student needs, disciplinary values, discourse, training/education requirements,

administration, oversight, social perception), not all of which made the cut in the plan as presented in this project. However, a particular site might require participants to address the community's perception of the work and social status of educators more thoroughly, for instance, and hopefully that need could be drawn out following data collection. Either way, this work has considerable value as a model, especially if it is modified to fit the needs of other schools.

Modifications for Other Institutions

The conditions at other institutions that invite plan modifications are many, but it helps to explore some of those modifications to provide guidance to other educators as they take this work and make it their own. First, this study assumes that resources are limited and much of the organizational work would be taken on by educators themselves as a minimally compensated effort. However, there are some schools that have the resources to provide compensation, funding, and even professional development staff, and the availability of these resources would not necessarily change the basic structure of the project. The benefits of the collaborative work itself would still exist, there would just be some aspects that would be easier or more palatable for participants. Leaders of a similar project should take advantage of any financial or administrative support that is made available, and modify the plan if necessary to make the best use of it. Next, this study assumes that the impact of education work on students takes the spotlight, but that is not necessarily the case in certain situations. For instance, there are some institutions where labor issues, political unrest, falling enrollment, or administrative tensions pose an obstacle holding a lower position on a theoretical educational hierarchy of needs (apologies to Abraham Maslow). In such circumstances, addressing those situations may provide the

entire motivation for the effort, and there is nothing to stop planners from exploring various facets of a specific workplace condition that does not explicitly include students. In still other cases, the level of interest from teachers or the size of the school may prevent a full-scale implementation of the program. At a small college or high school where only one or two pairs of teachers are interested in engaging with one another in a given year, it is perfectly appropriate to scale back the research portion to include the interested participants. In this case, the exploratory phase could even involve a mutual informal conversation where educators come together and air their concerns about cultural comprehension. In all of these cases, the plan is intended to be adaptable, not necessarily to make it easier to implement or cut down on the commitment level, but to ensure that the approach is matched to the context.

Current Conversations

1978	1
1979-1982	-
1983	1
1984-1993	-
1994	1
1995	2
1996	-
1998	1
1999-2003	-
2004	1
2005	1
2006-2010	-
2011	2
2012	1
2013	1
2014-2018	-

Figure I - Dates of Collaborations (Ch. 2)

In the table in Figure I, the number of collaborative efforts between secondary and post-secondary English educators described in the "Types and Purposes" section of the literature review by year are noted. The literature review is a thorough but not exhaustive survey of the available scholarship, so it should not be considered conclusive, but it indicates that scholarly work on the topic – at least published work – is sporadic. There are several possible reasons for this lack of scholarly attention. Perhaps secondary/post-secondary collaborations have never been an active area

of inquiry because they tend to be more challenging than collaborations within institutions or among educators of the same type since there is less need for the participants to spend time acclimating one another to differing conditions or attitudes. However, the collaboration in the Twin Teachers plan, in some ways, is *all* acclimatization, and thus the time spent breaking down cultural barriers is valuable given the plan's purpose. Another possible cause could stem from who is leading and participating in existing collaborations. If secondary/post-secondary collaborations exist but are led by high school teachers, they may be less likely to be published - and thus found by those who wish to study them - since the norm and the pressure to create publishable material from one's work is almost non-existent at the high school level[44]. This situation could correspond, then, with a lack of interest by journal editors, conference organizers, or professional organizations. Finally, there may be a perception that the need, which at the research sites in this study is an actual need, is fulfilled by other means, such as the National Writing Project, which is widely known and has university-based sites throughout the United States. Whatever the situation (or combination of situations) that may account for this lack of scholarly attention, the fact remains that there is no critical mass of ongoing dialogue that could provide a signal of where to go next.

This situation presents both opportunities and trials. The trials, of course, stem from the dearth of current guidance available to the collaborator and the possibility that no one outside of the plan site will be interested in the results of the work. As for guidance, a

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[44] Tiane Donahue also noted that high school voices were rare in the literature; see Chapter 2, page 33.

collaborator must accept what is available, adapting effective practices from similar efforts, understanding the provenance and impact of one's underlying values, and keeping in mind that helpful guidance may be under construction: today's work may be providing a pattern for those seeking help in the future. Regarding interest outside of the plan site, one has to acknowledge that gains in productive reflection and improvement within a school or group of schools are often an extraordinary achievement in themselves, securing benefits for students and faculty alike. For instance, the "Looking Both Ways" (LBW) regional collaboration described in Chapter 2 between the City University of New York (CUNY) and New York City public high schools was influential within New York City, ultimately bringing together 300 high school teachers and 150 college faculty, and providing a subsequent model for an intradepartmental collaboration within CUNY campuses in the Bronx (Whittaker 58). The project does not seem to have been influential outside of the New York City area, but there is no harm in that: there was a successful collaboration that pulled down barriers between two of the largest high school and university systems in the United States, and that is, in the end, a worthy achievement.

On the other hand, opportunities derive from the ability to spark a new conversation, to discover a new way to help students and make the profession of education more meaningful and enjoyable. Just because there is no significant ongoing conversation does not mean that one is not needed. One of the benefits of site-specific research such as that undertaken in this project is the chance to uncover something new that is not addressed in the available literature, providing a reminder that the education realm is not divided into those who do and those who advance scholarship, or those who speak and those who listen, but that the ability to contribute and influence positive change is available to everyone.

Suggestions for Future Research

Aside from the plentiful insights that could be drawn from a formal study of an implementation of the plan considered in Chapter 5 – especially regarding the ways in which the participants would inevitably modify the plan to fit their personal needs or to increase efficiency with (hopefully) the same outcomes – most of the implications for future research involve the identification of other areas where professional educator culture is expressed in a subconsciously accepted way. Where can educators uncover the cultural practices and ways of communication that tend to separate and isolate?

These abound in English and language arts and in education more generally. College and high school articulation was identified as particularly relevant in this study because of the established historical bifurcation between high schools and colleges as institutions and the way that content which is combined in high school English, like non-fiction writing skills and literary study, is split off into separate courses in college, some of which are required (first-year composition) and others which are typically electives outside of a major (humanities, literature). However, these are not the only areas where differences in cultural practices call for a collaborative approach. For instance, composition and literature instructors at a college, especially at a larger college or university where the teaching roles follow more defined tracks, have slightly differing ways of communication and comprehension within their fields. The possibilities for improvement are not as great since they are already having some of these conversations as a function of their jobs, but the needs are still extant.

There are also differences in role that are open for exploration. One of the virtues of the 2006 NCTE collection *What Is "College-Level" Writing?* used as a partial basis for the "Professional Goals" section of the literature review is its organization by perspectives: "High School Perspectives", "College Perspectives", "Student Perspectives", and "Administrative Perspectives". The underlying idea was to create a dialogue among actors who have varying relationships with college-level writing on a daily basis as a part of their jobs. So, for instance, someone from the "college" perspective must teach college-level writing as a basic function of their job but also has an opinion with greater weight when it comes to actually defining college-level writing. Someone from the "high school" perspective has to help students aim toward college-level writing without the benefit of holding a defining role, and a student is in the process of figuring out the definition of college-level writing as a non-professional. Then, an administrator's perspective is one where college-level writing is one small part of a broader set of goals, so while they are education professionals, they tend to have some distance from daily application. The joint enterprise negotiated in each of those subfields, to use Wenger's term defining communities of practice, creates divergent cultural expressions which could be productively explored through a similar plan. For instance, a set of research instruments could be developed to help understand the cultural differences between teachers and administrators, and distinctions could be made on the basis of the type of administrative role held (e.g. department chair, dean, principal, superintendent, curriculum specialist, enrollment or retention expert) or whether or not an administrator had past teaching experience. Helpfully, these kinds of collaborations could be managed within a school, simplifying the planning process, though there are certain pitfalls that would require attention; the power

differential between certain administrators and teachers who work under their authority could have a chilling effect on the teacher's contribution or impair the teacher's ability to control the administrator's perception of their work. Nevertheless, such cultural distinctions based on role are ripe for investigation through a collaborative effort.

Finally, the writing across the curriculum (WAC) movement is a ready-made conversation for which some of the infrastructure already exists. Many universities already have WAC programs[45]; some active, some dormant. One would merely need to add the exploration of cultural differences between disciplines as an area of active inquiry, as expressed in approaches to writing in scholarship and applied work, student and workplace expectations, and the use of writing in pedagogy. A collaborative plan modeled on the twin teachers effort could be implemented between professors in academic departments focused on writing; it is no secret that the cultural differences between disciplines in the university – particularly among the applied sciences, pre-professional fields, and the humanities – is perhaps even more considerable than the difference between English and language arts practitioners serving at different levels of schooling. These differences are expressed in varying attitudes toward the relative importance of writing as a learning and/or rhetorical tool (McLeod 20). For example, in the legal profession, writing has immediate rhetorical relevance as a function of a student's future career; in many ways, the practice of law *is* the practice of rhetoric. In other fields, such as civil engineering, writing is used by instructors at many colleges primarily as an assessment tool: how can a student show what they know?

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[45] One of the research sites in this study already has (or had) a WAC program; the author was the Graduate Assistant for Murray State University's WAC Office in 2011.

As a result, the sense of the importance of writing as a rhetorical tool in the everyday practice of a civil engineer – communication with clients, making the case for the efficiency or adequacy of a particular design solution, presenting a vision for the value of a project – is underdeveloped. However, a particular engineering professor might have a panoply of reasons why the particular emphasis on writing in his or her field developed as it did, and these would be useful to explore in a WAC-based collaborative effort, increasing the mutual understanding between, for instance, law or composition instructors, who see writing and rhetoric dyed into the fabric of their fields, and civil engineering or information systems technologies instructors, some of whom see writing as a useful but somewhat superfluous skill.

Conclusion

In many respects, the research and plan considered in this project apply to educators themselves the learning strategies that are found to be effective with students in a way that is relevant to teacher needs. These strategies include reflection, goal setting, problem solving, and exposure to unfamiliar concepts in a hospitable environment where one can make connections to prior understood experiences. So, in the same way that students find strategies like these helpful for meeting their ultimate educational needs (e.g., development of thinking strategies, job preparation, socialization, enculturation, citizenship, formation of mind, body, and spirit), English educators can also find such strategies useful for meeting their more immediate needs (e.g. helping students articulate between their high school and college composition/literacy coursework, determining the relative importance of various emphases within the field of English and language arts, increasing tolerance and

understanding, improving working and learning conditions). Since so many of those needs are addressed by - or restricted by - expressions of professional culture, that seemed like a fruitful place to begin.

Other practitioners in other contexts have found various ways to increase the cultural porosity between secondary and post-secondary educators, and those approaches typically involve some kind of collaboration, though that collaboration is often performed on a larger scale. However, reports from educators collaborating at all scales, from the National Writing Project to individual team teaching, indicate reduced barriers and improved outcomes for students as a result of more informed, avid, and first-rate teaching.

In this “sister cities” or “twin towns” modeled effort, each teacher serves as an emissary of their respective domain of teaching, bringing the insights from one related cultural context to another. Many of the important qualities of the “twin towns” and “twin teachers” endeavors are shared, like preexisting similarities (both are teachers and scholars in some capacity), organized, deliberate work (the participants follow an outline complete with reflection and real-life writing), and an committed focus on bridging cultural difference out of a mutual desire for growth and a genuine respect for understanding the other. This plan may contrast with other collaborative efforts in important ways, but if there is one quality that gives it distinction, it is the emphasis on culture as the practices, philosophies, social customs, and ways of life of two separate groups of educators, especially insofar as those expressions of culture are unacknowledged, unexamined, and have impacts on other aspects of discourse and practice.

If other collaborative efforts engage indirectly with culture as a side effect of targeting another more explicit goal such as improving writing pedagogy, lateral transfer of

information, introducing new standards or objectives, encouragement to increase rigor, linking of theory to practice, promoting writing across the curriculum, implementation of new technologies, standardization of assessment, or alignment of curriculum – all worthy and important aims – this work engages with the underlying expressions of professional culture that would imperceptibly influence all of those facets of educational work, foregrounding them and providing a basis of awareness and appreciation that could serve to support other improvements in teaching and scholarship.

Appendix A: Researcher's Personal and Professional Profile

Personal Attributes

A good practice for revealing potential biases in qualitative research is for the researcher to show his or her hand; to reveal those aspects of self that could impact the preparation and interpretation of the research. To that end, I am providing here a profile of my personal attributes and professional ideologies to guide the reader.

For my personal attributes, I am using Allan Johnson's explanation of an attempt to map differences based on social characteristics (14-7). He adapts the "diversity wheel" concept developed by Loden and Rosener in 1991, which has an inner core of relatively static social characteristics and an outer shell of characteristics that are subject to change.

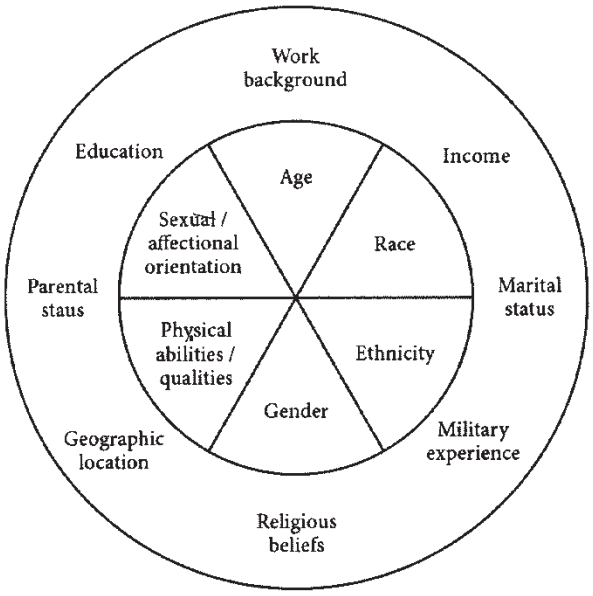

FIGURE 1 The Diversity Wheel. From *Workforce America* by M. Loden and J. Rosener McGraw-Hill, 1991. Reproduced with permission from the McGraw-Hill Companies.

Figure J: The Diversity Wheel (Johnson 15)

In the inner core, I am a 32-year-old heterosexual white male of predominantly English ancestry, my immediate ancestors settling in southernmost Illinois from Kentucky

and Tennessee. I have no physical disabilities or mental handicaps, though I am nearsighted.

My educational history, prior to entering the doctoral program at Murray State University, is a Master of Arts in English Literature from Murray State University (2015), a Bachelor of Science in English from Mid-Continent University (2009), which was a small Christian (Southern Baptist) college in western Kentucky, and two Associates degrees from Shawnee Community College in Ullin, Illinois, including an Associate of Fine Arts in Music. My work background is a combination of teaching English composition and business administration, working at a design firm in southern Illinois. I am a single parent of one child, though I am engaged to be married in late 2019. I live in a small town in southernmost Illinois, and I am a Catholic Christian, with a family background of evangelical Christianity. I have never served in the armed forces.

While it may be difficult to connect these attributes to any biases in my research, there certainly could be an impact on the rapport established between myself and the interview subjects. For instance, I might ask the "wrong" questions or miss a cultural reference that would lead to an interesting line of inquiry if I were interviewing an African-American or Islamic teacher, not being a part of either one of those communities. However, more important for the interpretation of my results are the beliefs I hold as an educator.

Professional Ideologies

In his text *Curriculum Theory: Conflicting Visions and Enduring Concerns*, curriculum scholar and Boston College professor emeritus Michael Schiro clusters the educational beliefs of teachers into four broad areas that he calls "curriculum ideologies", or beliefs about the purposes of education and methods for achieving those purposes. These

ideologies are a useful lens for discussing possible researcher biases since they provide a quick, digestible overview of distinctions in educational philosophy. The four ideologies are as follows:

- Scholar Academic: Oriented toward the purpose of transferring the "accumulated knowledge of our culture: that of the academic disciplines" (Schiro 4). Academic disciplines take on greater importance, being the means through which a society organizes its inquiry into truth. The purpose of education, then, is to induct young people into academic disciplines by guiding them through its hierarchy by imparting disciplinary values and methods.
- Social Efficiency: Oriented toward society, meeting its needs efficiently. "Society" calls the shots, so the ideology takes on whichever ultimate value captivates that culture. Behavioral objectives take center stage, particularly behaviors that fulfill society's needs. The best education, then, is one that most efficiently trains the student to perform particular behaviors and fulfills the needs of the client – that is, society (Schiro 5).
- Learner Centered: Oriented toward the needs and concerns of individuals, toward the growth of the person in harmony with their attributes and in union with the meaning that individual students make for themselves. A learner-centered teacher, then, seeks to facilitate the capabilities that are implicated by a person's innate abilities (Schiro 5-6).
- Social Reconstruction: Oriented toward the development of a just society, using education as a process through which circumstances can be developed from where they are to where they should be. A good education results in the inculcation of

healthy social values so that participants in a society can “attain maximum satisfaction” and live in a just environment (Schiro 6-7).

For his readers, Schiro provides an inventory to help determine personal fit within the four ideologies. After taking the inventory, my results were clearly divided, with two “high” ideologies and two “low” ideologies. I charted the results according to the instructions in the text, and I assigned numbers to each ranking and produced a number that reflects my level of matching with each one (24 is the highest possible score, and 6 is the lowest). The results follow, ranked by number:

- Scholar Academic: 19
- Social Reconstruction: 17 (variable; highest marks on “purpose”, “knowledge”, and “childhood”)
- Learner Centered: 12 (consistently low marks with the exception of “learning”)
- Social Efficiency: 12 (consistently low marks with the exception of “teaching”)

As indicated, I had a high match with Scholar Academic and Social Reconstruction, and a low match with Learner Centered and Social Efficiency.

These results, especially the combination of the highest two ideologies, are an accurate reflection of my own priorities. Advancing knowledge within the context of an academic discipline, collectively sharing definitions and prioritizing material, appeals to me, because I believe it is an effective way to plumb the depths of a particular realm of knowledge. I also believe that a primary goal of education is to help individuals learn to both value and discover truth, and to acquire important knowledge shared with others, which allows us to communicate effectively with others who have the same knowledge. This dovetails closely with the Scholar Academic ideology.

Fitting with the emphasis in the Scholar Academic ideology on supporting "inquirers into the truth" (Schiro 4), I am a values-driven learner and teacher. I believe that there is an ultimate purpose for teaching and learning, and part of this purpose happens to encompass some of the values included in the Social Reconstruction ideology; my purpose includes, but is not limited to, the social justice goals expressed by Schiro. These purposes include a consciousness "of the problems of our society and the injustices done to its members" (6). I believe that truth and the pursuit of truth are inherently valuable, but this pursuit leads us to build a just society driven by the infinite value of the human person, and a society that helps others likewise pursue and value truth. In concordance with the priorities in the Social Reconstruction ideology, this goal would naturally cause us to attempt to see our society "as it is" and have in mind how it "should be" (6). These ideologies combined appear to be a plausible reflection of my own ideologies.

The low marks are also accurate, though I do not necessarily have a problem with the goals and methods preferred within those ideologies. I just happen to deemphasize them, in some cases. For example, within the Social Efficiency ideology, I have no problem with the training of young people to "function as future mature contributing members of society" or giving them "skills and procedures" useful for the workplace and the functioning of society (Schiro 5). I just happen to believe that the *telos* of learning reaches to a more universally important level, and an education that stops at producing economically functional adults falls short. For philosophical reasons, I also tend to prioritize the needs and goals of the human person over societies and institutions. Societies and institutions serve the person, not the other way around.

Likewise, I do not have any problem with the Learner Centered ideology, insofar as it emphasizes the "needs and concerns of individuals" (Schiro 5). Indeed, based on what I have described so far, I would have assumed a closer match with this ideology. I share many of the goals of this ideology, but I deviate from it because of underlying assumptions. For instance, I am skeptical of an approach that overemphasizes the importance of our "innate natures"; sometimes our innate natures lead us to something good and true, but they are just as likely, without training and development, to lead us to something bad, useless, or false. Humans often innately gravitate towards bad qualities (self-deceit, laziness, stagnation) just as easily as they gravitate towards good qualities (pursuit of truth, concern for others). As a result, sometimes the best action may involve either supporting or resisting our innate natures in pursuit of our goals. Finally, I struggle with the tendency toward subjectivism and creating one's own meaning, since it may lead to a devaluing of objective truth and setting of goals that are entirely unmeasurable[46].

Regardless of their inability to provide finely-grained assessments of an individual educator, Schiro's descriptions provide a useful and well-defined point of discussion, and of course, I would find that valuable. Those fitting into a Scholar Academic ideology are more likely to believe that "understand[ing]...an academic discipline involves learning its content, conceptual frameworks, and ways of thinking" (Schiro 4). Understanding my ideologies, hopefully, will help the reader understand my view of the work in this collaborative plan, offsetting the tendency of qualitative research interpretation to smuggle in the biases of the researcher: c*aveat lector*.

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[46] Parts of the "Professional Ideologies" are adapted from the author's previous coursework.

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol (Creswell 183); Instructors; Murray State University/Shawnee Community College

Interviewer: Zachary Garrett
Interviewee: <<>>
Location: <<>>
Date: <<>>

Initial Instructions for the Interviewer:

- Set up and test recording equipment.
- Provide the recruitment letter in advance or allow time for the subject to read the recruitment letter and consent letter.
- Start recording; note the date and time of the start of interview.
- Introduce self and purpose for the interview.
- Obtain consent from the subject to record; confirm receipt and understanding of the consent letter.

Interview Questions:

BACKGROUND AND BELIEFS

- Introduce yourself and describe your professional background.

Additional probe: Do you consider yourself to have a teaching philosophy, and if so, what is it? How do you express the value of your work?

Additional probe: What do you believe are the fundamental qualities of college-level writing?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Describe the opportunities for professional development at <<college name>>.

Additional probe: Which areas for professional development are most overlooked, and why do you think they would be useful to you?

Additional probe: Describe the institutional support given to your professional development.

HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE DIFFERENCES

- Explain your understanding of the high school English classroom, especially when it comes to writing and reading assignments.

Additional probe: What is the source of your understanding of the high school English classroom?

- What do you know about the teaching strategies that high school teachers use to teach writing?

Additional probe: How do they differ from your own teaching strategies?

- What do you know about the standards and objectives that high school teachers are required to meet?

Additional probe: How do these expectations differ from your own?

STUDENT PREPAREDNESS

- Describe your high achieving students, particularly the strength of their writing abilities and their preparedness for college-level writing.
- Describe your low achieving students, particularly the strength of their writing abilities and their preparedness for college-level writing.

WHAT WOULD HELP?

- What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in high school English (examples of conditions include types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)?

Closing Instructions for the Interviewer:

- Thank the participant for their time.
- Provide an invitation to contact and follow up with questions, clarifications of answers, and research products.
- Note the date and time before turning off recording equipment.

Interview Protocol (Creswell 183); Teachers; Local High Schools

Interviewer: Zachary Garrett
Interviewee: <<>>
Location: <<>>
Date: <<>>

Initial Instructions for the Interviewer:

- Set up and test recording equipment.
- Provide the recruitment letter in advance or allow time for the subject to read the recruitment letter and consent letter.
- Start recording; note the date and time of the start of interview.
- Introduce self and purpose for the interview.
- Obtain consent from the subject to record; confirm receipt and understanding of the consent letter.

Interview Questions:

BACKGROUND AND BELIEFS

- Introduce yourself and describe your professional background.

Additional probe: Do you consider yourself to have a teaching philosophy, and if so, what is it? How do you express the value of your work?

Additional probe: What do you believe are the fundamental qualities of college-level writing?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Describe the opportunities for professional development at <<school name>>.

Additional probe: Which areas for professional development are most overlooked, and why do you think they would be useful to you?

Additional probe: Describe the institutional support given to your professional development.

HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE DIFFERENCES

- Explain your understanding of the college English composition classroom, especially when it comes to writing and reading assignments.

Additional probe: What is the source of your understanding of the college English composition classroom?

- What do you know about the teaching strategies that college instructors use to teach writing?

Additional probe: How do they differ from your own teaching strategies?

- What do you know about the standards and objectives that college instructors are required to meet?

Additional probe: How do these expectations differ from your own?

STUDENT PREPAREDNESS

- Describe your high achieving students, particularly the strength of their writing abilities and their preparedness for college-level writing.
- Describe your low achieving students, particularly the strength of their writing abilities and their preparedness for college-level writing.

WHAT WOULD HELP?

- What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in college English composition (examples of conditions include types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)?

Closing Instructions for the Interviewer:

- Thank the participant for their time.
- Provide an invitation to contact and follow up with questions, clarifications of answers, and research products.
- Note the date and time before turning off recording equipment.

Appendix C: Institutional Profile for College Research Sites

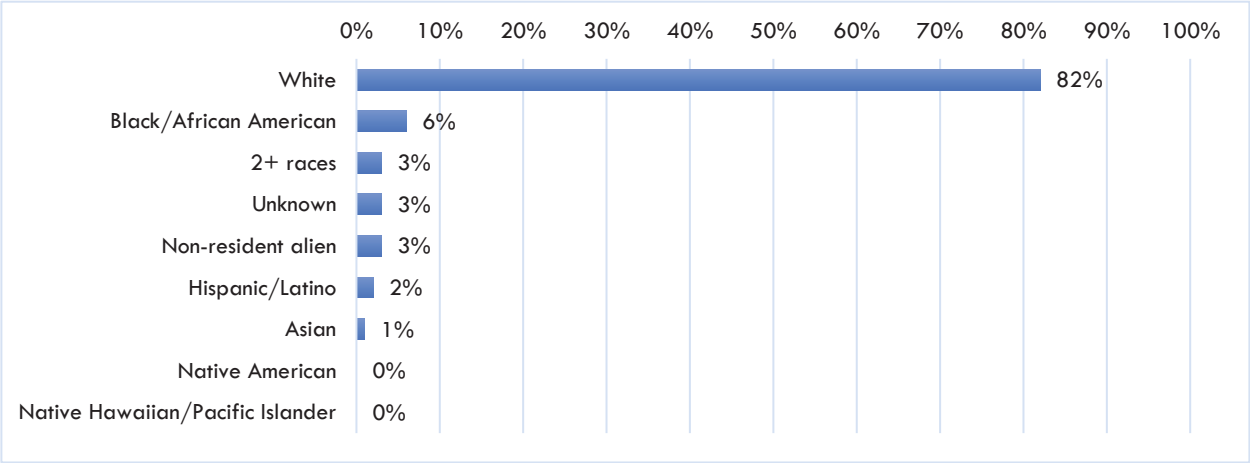
Murray State University

Carnegie Classifications

Basic: Master's Colleges & Universities: Larger Programs
Undergraduate Instructional Program: Professions plus arts & sciences, some graduate coexistence
Graduate Instructional Program: Postbaccalaureate: Comprehensive programs
Enrollment Profile: High undergraduate
Undergraduate Profile: Four-year, full-time, selective, higher transfer-in
Size and Setting: Four-year, medium, primarily residential

Selected National Center for Education Statistics Data

Student Population: 10,012 (8,559 undergraduate)
Student-to-faculty ratio: 15:1
Degrees Offered: Less than one year certificate; Associate's degree; Bachelor's degree; Postbaccalaureate certificate; Master's degree; Doctor's degree - professional practice; Doctor's degree – other
Annual Estimated In-State Tuition (2018-2019): $9,084
Percentage of Students Receiving Federal Grants: 32%
Undergraduate Attendance Status: 77% full-time; 23% part-time
Undergraduate Student Gender: 60% female; 40% male
Undergraduate Race/Ethnicity:



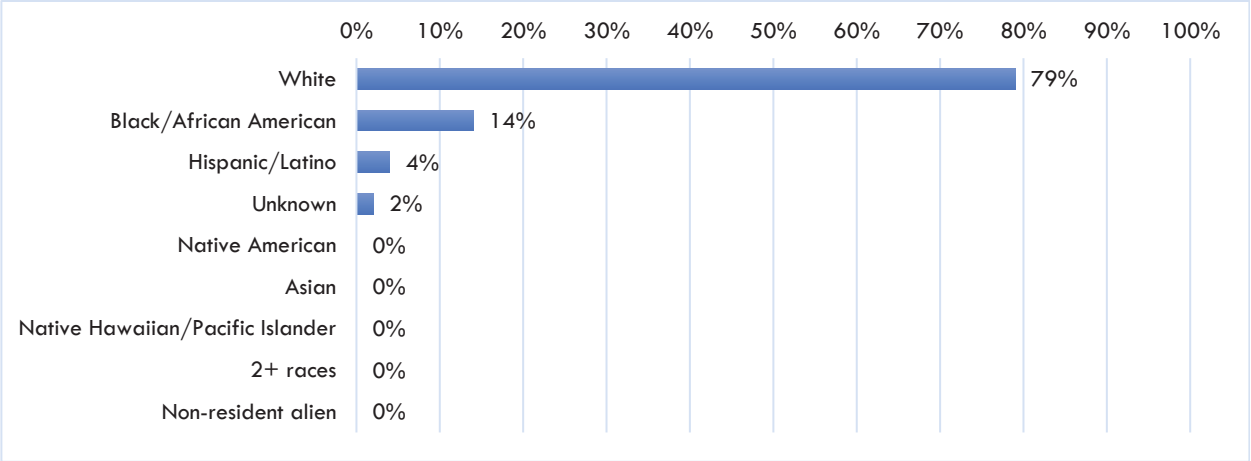
Shawnee Community College

Carnegie Classifications

Basic: Associate's Colleges: Mixed Transfer/Career & Technical-High Nontraditional
Undergraduate Instructional Program: Associate's Colleges: High Vocational & Technical
Graduate Instructional Program: n/a
Enrollment Profile: Exclusively undergraduate two-year
Undergraduate Profile: Two-year, mixed part/full-time
Size and Setting: Two-year, small

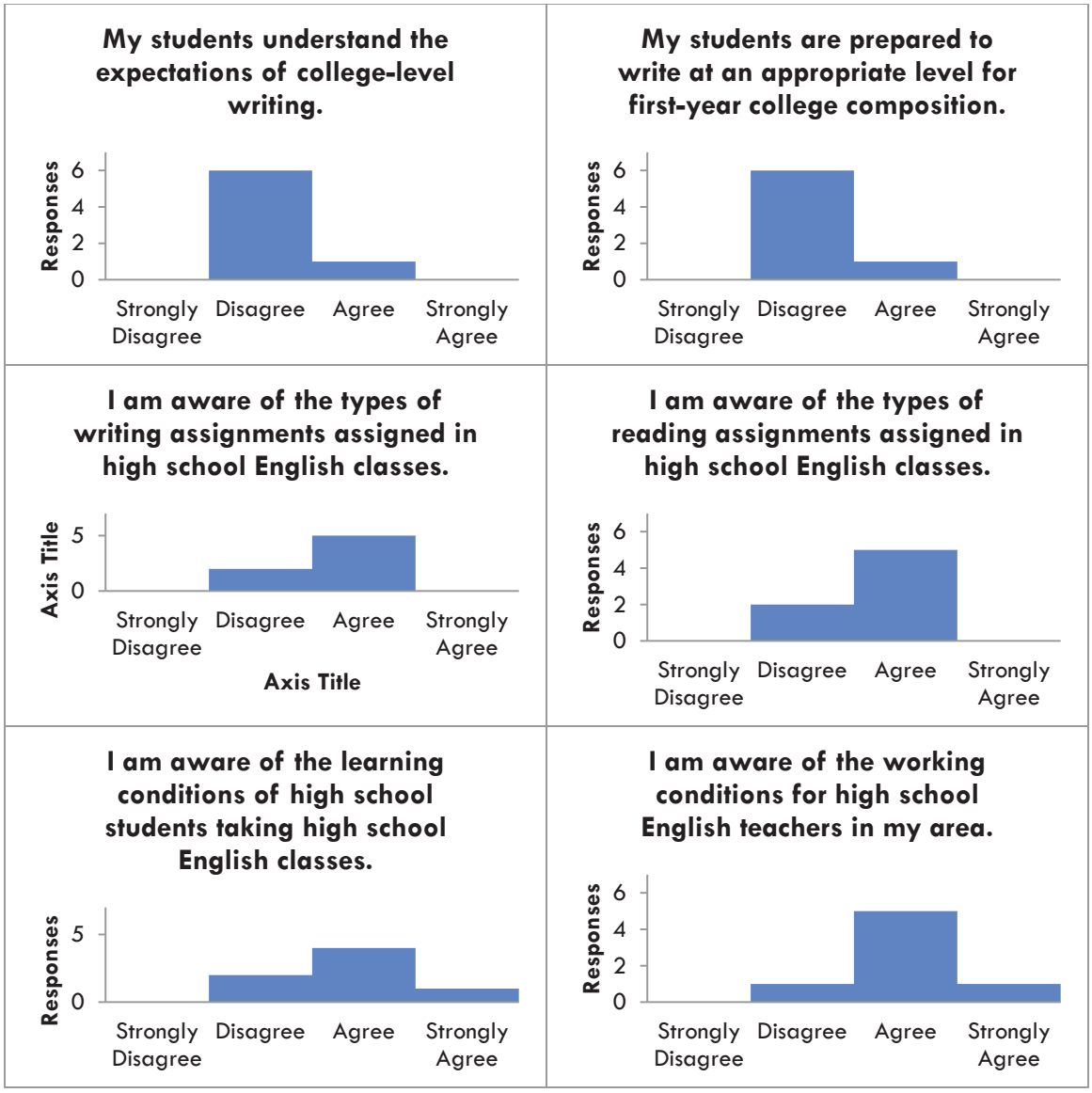
Selected National Center for Education Statistics Data

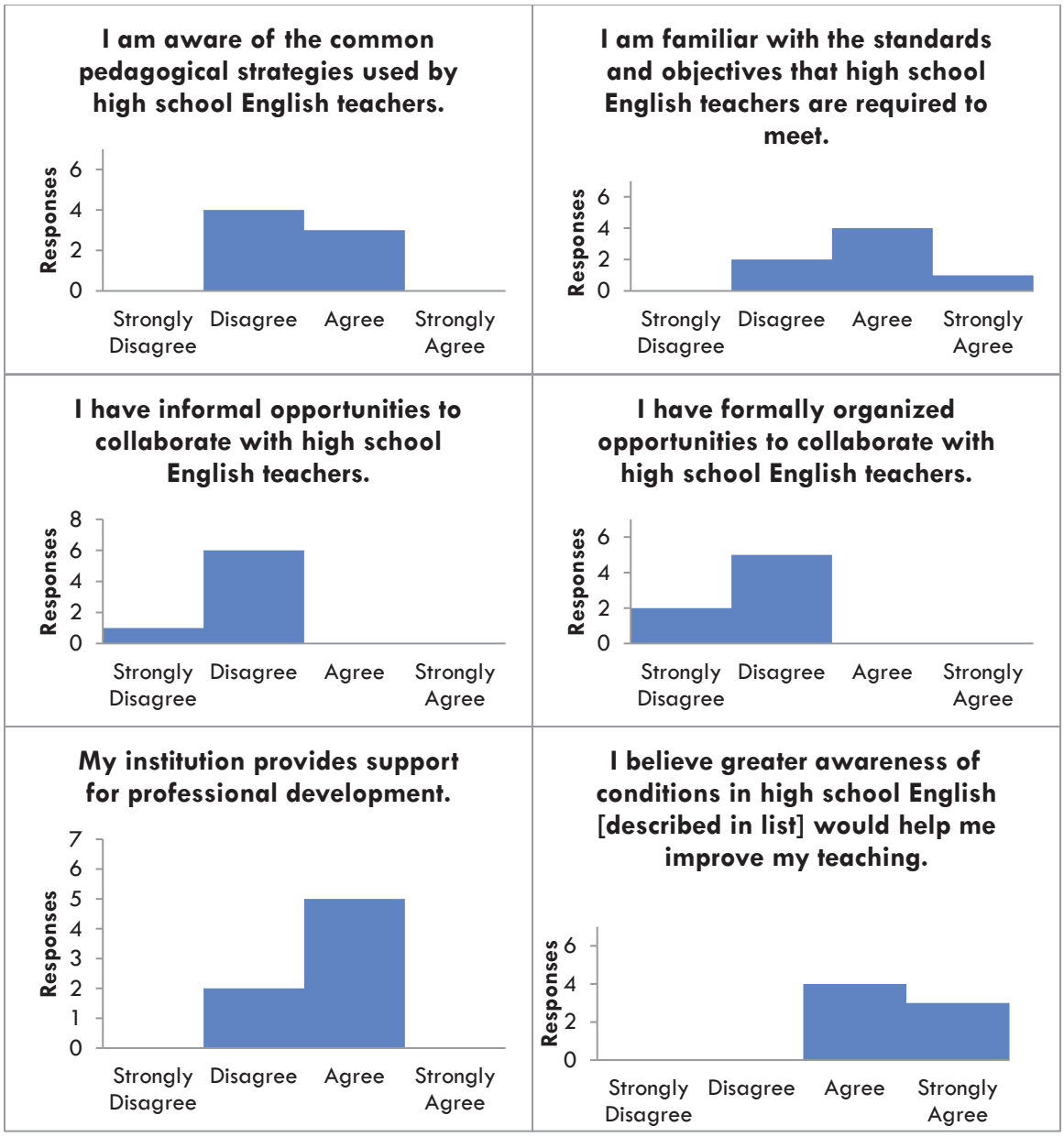
Student Population: 1,505 (all undergraduate)
Student-to-faculty ratio: 19:1
Degrees Offered: Less than one year certificate; One but less than two years certificate; Associate's degree
Annual Estimated In-State Tuition (2018-2019): $ 4,000
Percentage of Students Receiving Federal Grants: 63%
Undergraduate Attendance Status: 45% full-time; 55% part-time
Undergraduate Student Gender: 64% female; 36% male
Undergraduate Race/Ethnicity:



Appendix D: Complete Surveys - College Instructors

Murray State University



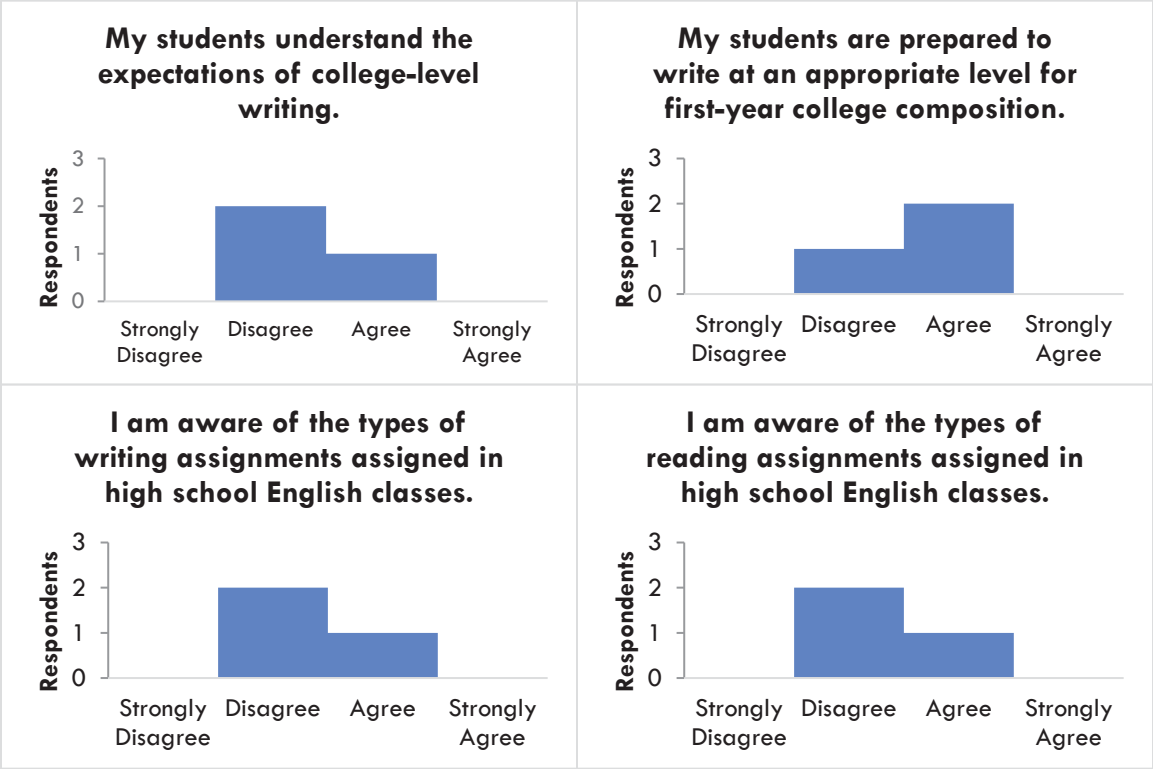


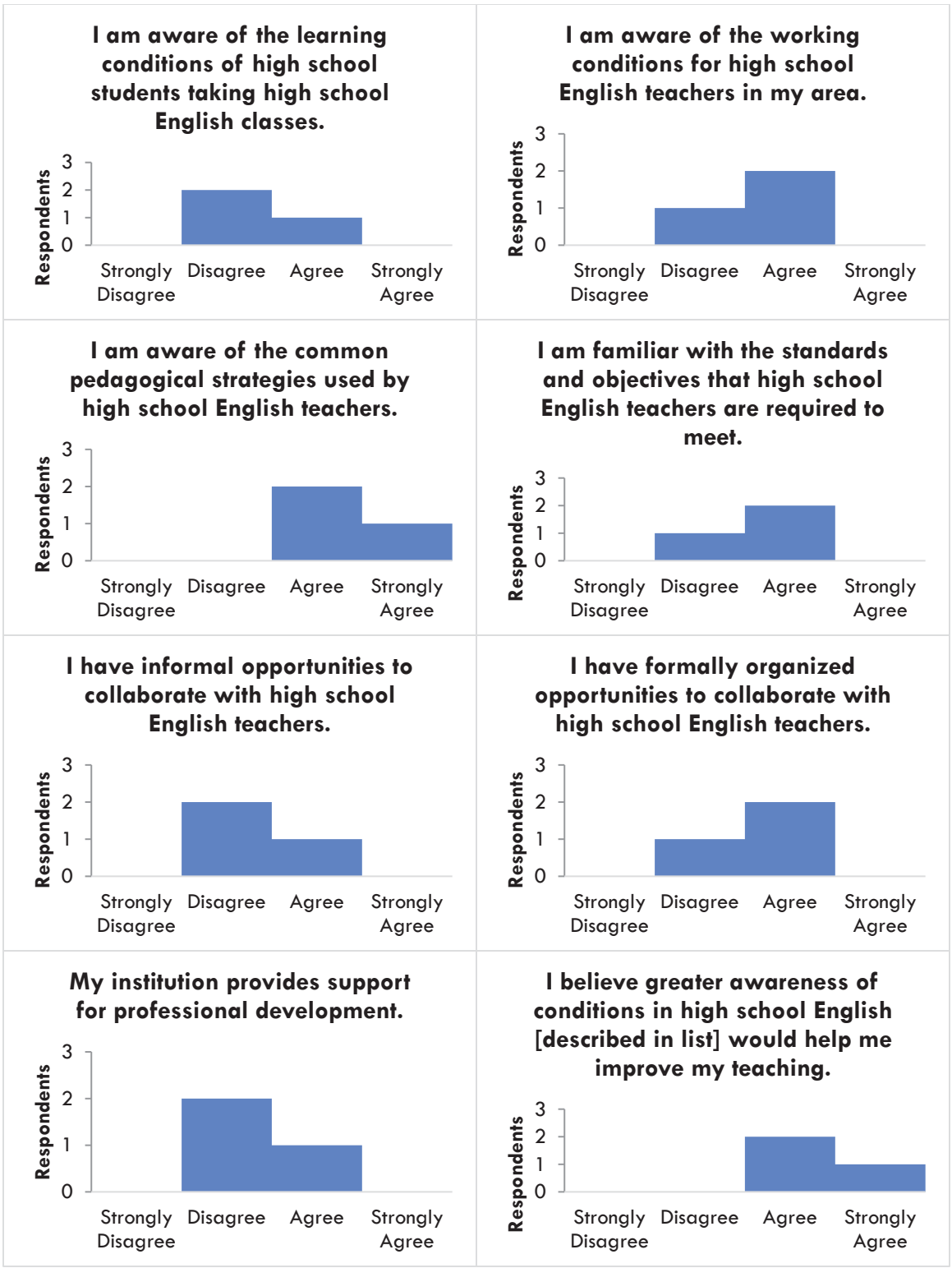
In one sentence, describe the fundamental qualities of college-level writing.
Effective college-level writing provides a focused yet well-developed argument or analysis related to a relevant, discipline-specific topic or question, and it demonstrates--subtly but consistently--a keen awareness of the author's purpose, the text's generic conventions, and the audience's needs and expectations.
The ability to express one's carefully-thought-out ideas clearly and correctly, demonstrating both serious critical thinking and at least moderate command of the English language.
Instruction and practice in close reading, research, and critical thinking as applied to academic writing, with emphasis on research, analysis, synthesis, and argument.
Applying rhetorical elements (audience awareness for example), including well-researched support, to add value to an academic conversation.
College-level writing engages skillfully with a variety of sources to make a complex, original, and well-organized argument.

[no response]

What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in college English composition (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)?
My students seem to arrive with extremely varied levels of preparation. Some remain stuck on the five paragraph essay, while others have had opportunities to work on research-driven projects over multiple drafts. For the students who seem to arrive least prepared (unsure about how to find sources, struggling with basic organization, difficulty differentiating between an argument and a report, etc.), I am curious to know what writing and reading assignments they have covered in the past, but might not fully remember, that I could refer to in order to help them transfer and adapt more of what they already know about writing into the college classroom.
Periodic written updates of HS standards and expectations; periodic meetings/workshops with area HS teachers
Workshops for area high school English teachers hosted by MSU ENG 105 composition instructors.
I've always thought instead of grades, students could have a checklist of objectives accompanied by written, reflective notes from the student and teachers about strengths and weaknesses in writing. Also a portfolio of sorts that follow them from HS to college. Other than that, just questions like you ask here are important to discuss with all stakeholders involved.
Detailed understanding of types of writing assignments, pedagogical strategies, and teacher's assessment of writing (rather than how writing is assessed on standardized tests).
Regularly scheduled meetings between high school English teachers and first-year composition instructors would be very helpful, at least I hope so. It has been my observation that individual teachers vary in what is most important.

Shawnee Community College



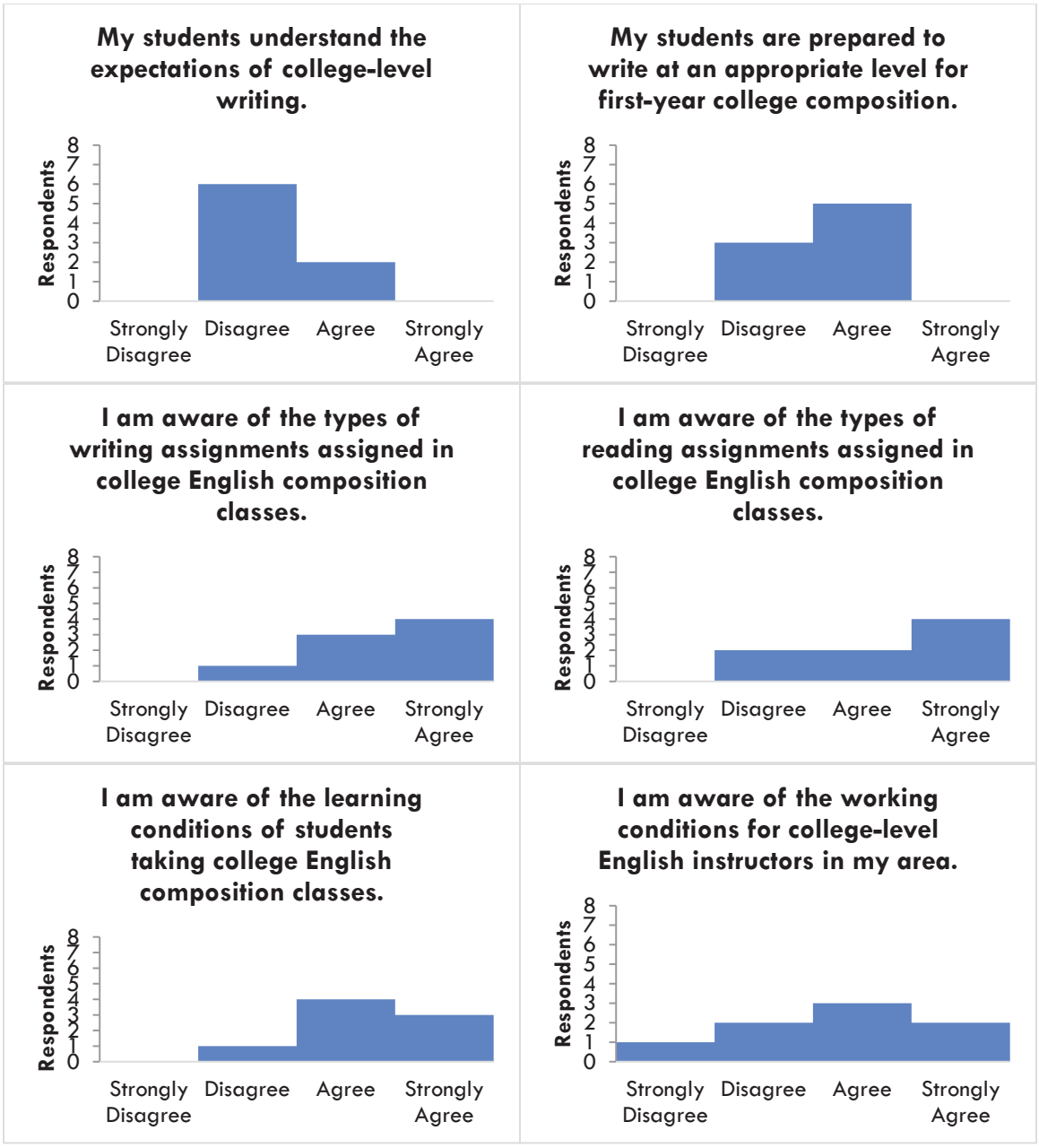

I am aware of the learning conditions of high school students taking high school English classes.
I am aware of the working conditions for high school English teachers in my area.
I am aware of the common pedagogical strategies used by high school English teachers.
I am familiar with the standards and objectives that high school English teachers are required to meet.
I have informal opportunities to collaborate with high school English teachers.
I have formally organized opportunities to collaborate with high school English teachers.
My institution provides support for professional development.
I believe greater awareness of conditions in high school English [described in list] would help me improve my teaching.
Respondents
0
1
2
3
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree

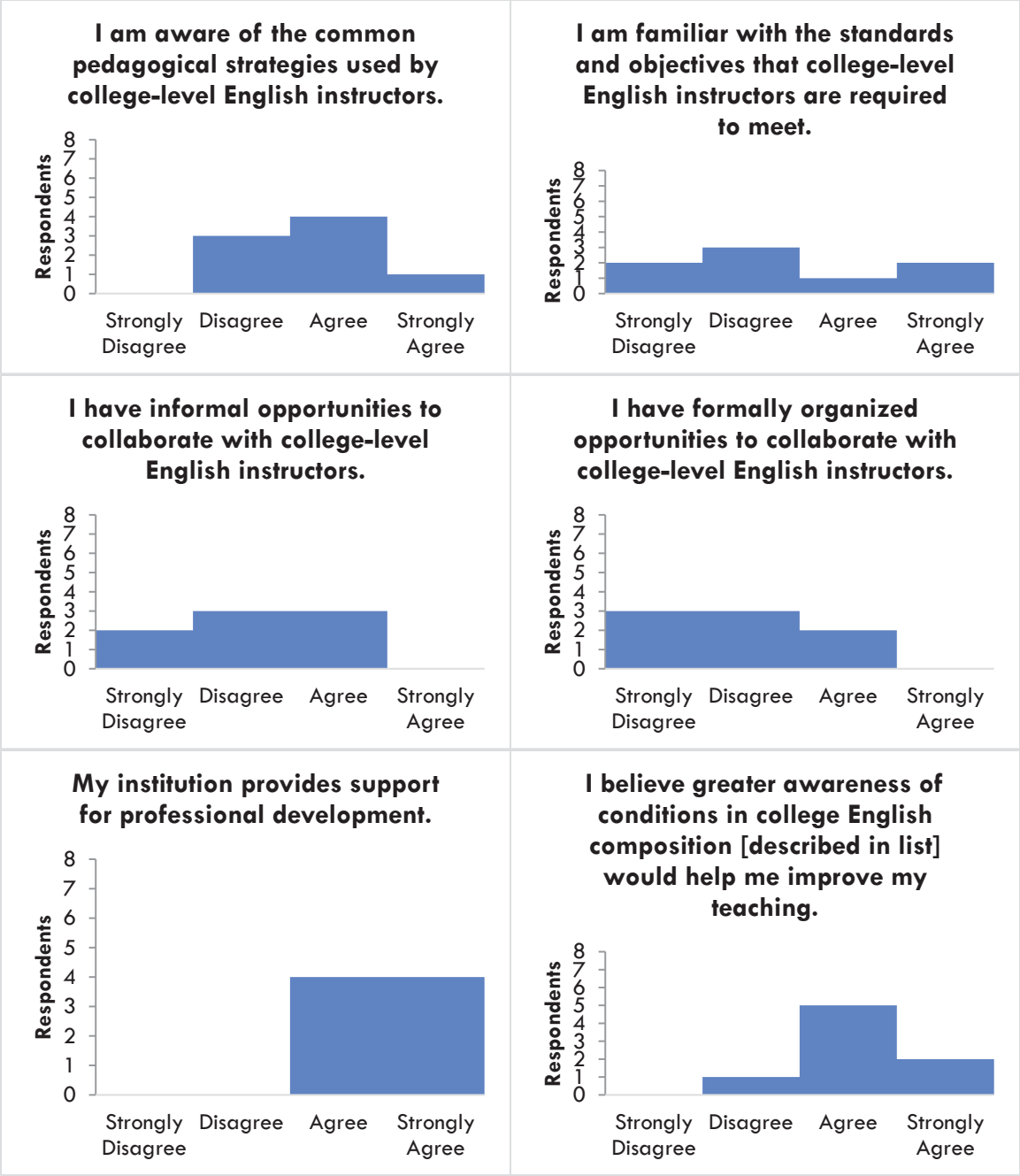
In one sentence, describe the fundamental qualities of college-level writing.
Good college writing is nuanced for audience and purpose.
Professional, error free, research based writing
College-level composition should assist student to produce clear, concise writing which communicates an important message for an audience.

What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in college English composition (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)?
n/a
samples of high school writings and readings from current students, discussions, meetings, online discussion boards with high school and college level teachers.
Workshop opportunities for both high school teachers and college instructors

Appendix E: Complete Surveys - High School Teachers

Murray State University Area

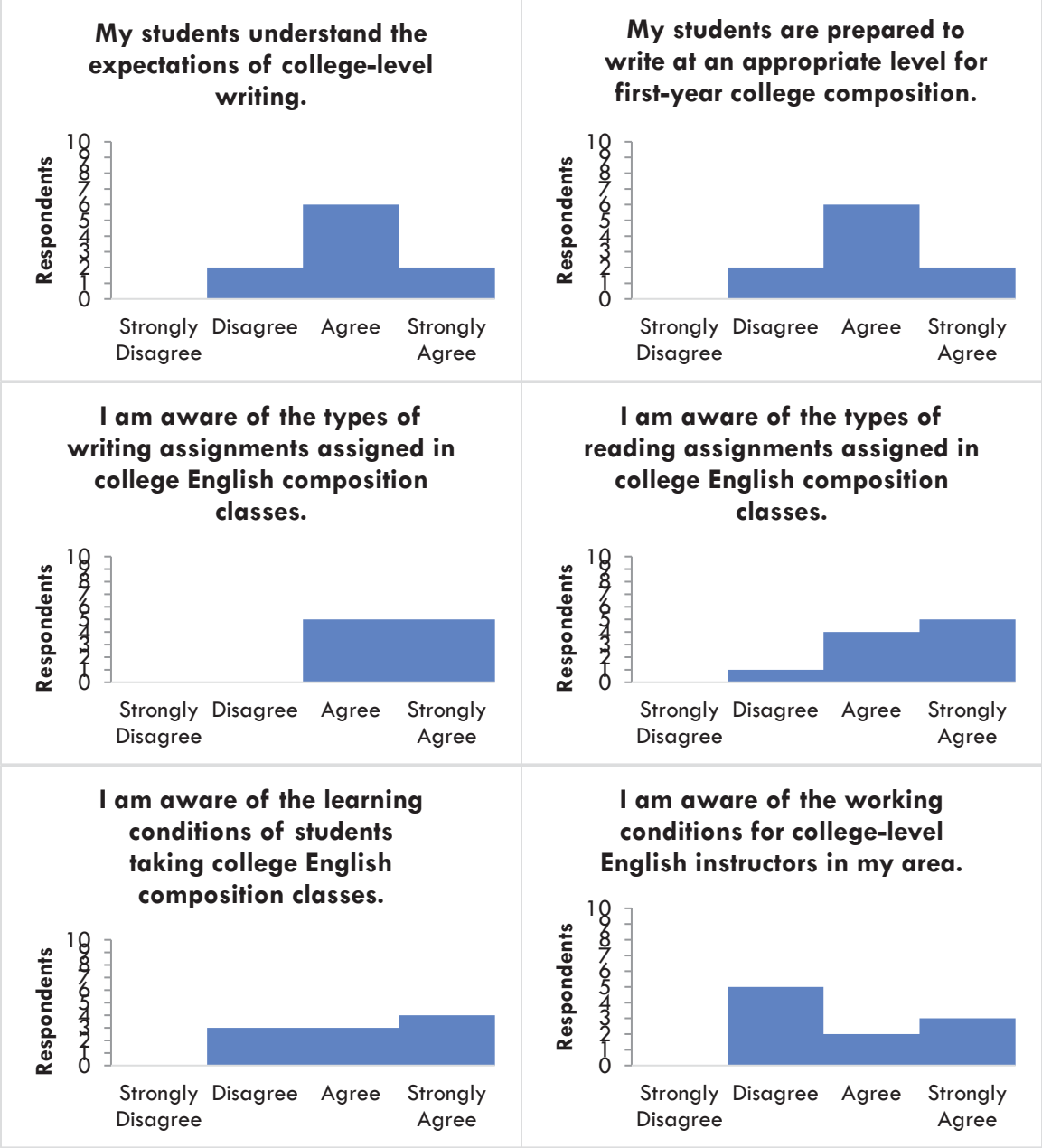


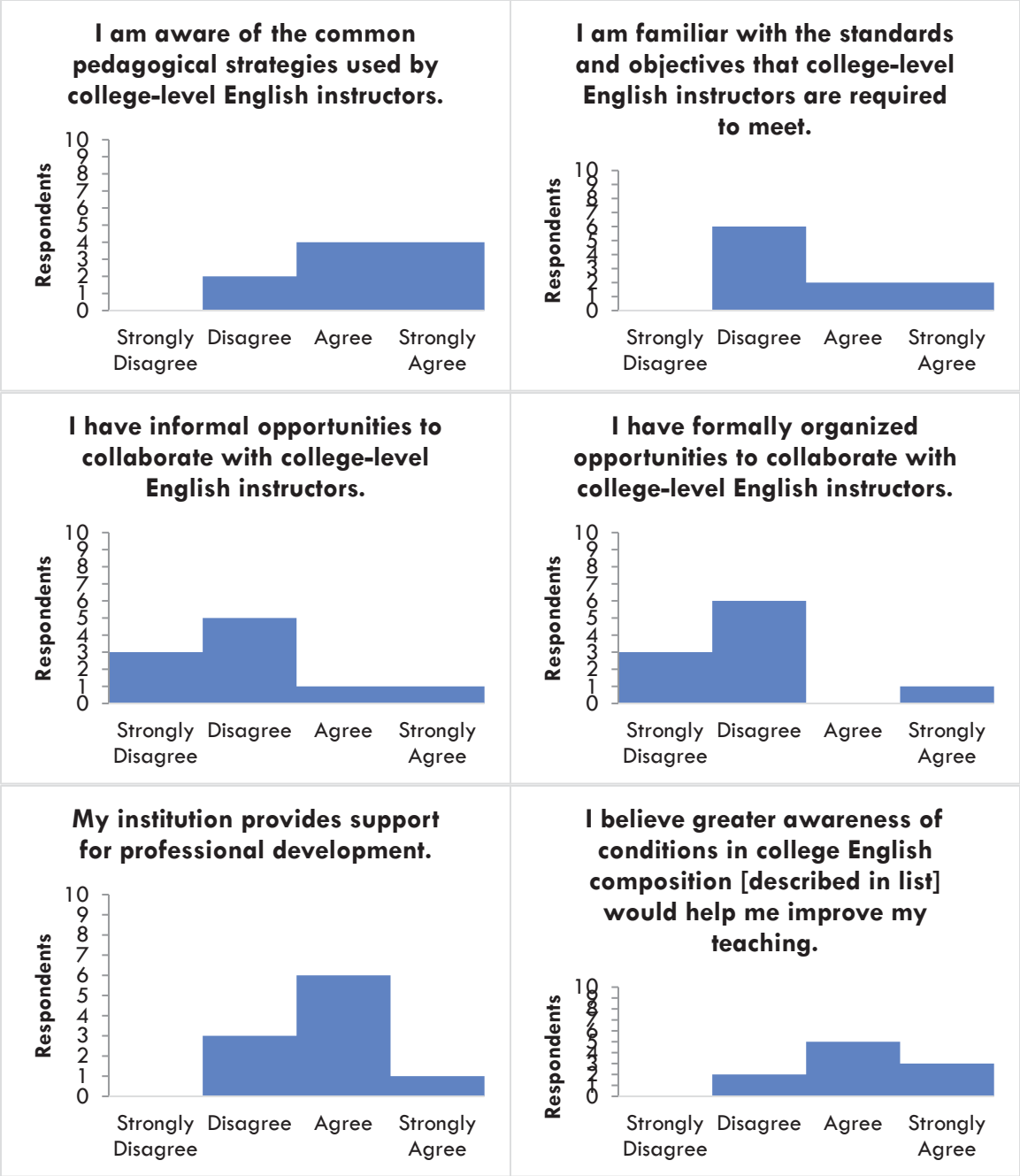


In one sentence, describe the fundamental qualities of college-level writing.
Fundamental qualities of college-level writing include a strong thesis, support/evidence of claims, thoughtful analysis, and command of the mechanics of formal standard English usage.
Writing is precise and clean.
Students writing at the college level should be accomplished in using the formal register of composition, synthesizing information, exhibiting thoughtful analysis and elaboration, and employing accurate grammar and mechanics.
It is articulate, concise, professional, and thoroughly addresses the topic.
College-level writing is clear, concise, organized, and communicated with a solid vocabulary.

Students should be able to express analysis in an academic and mature writing style.
Know how to craft a thesis and organize support logically.
[no response]

What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in college English composition (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)?
Professional development with college standards; however, please remember that we are bound to the high school standards which do not always align, and ultimately we are assessed by OUR standards, not the college standards.
College classes and professional development.
I co-teach a dual credit English composition class, so I am aware of the competencies needed for college composition. I think English teachers are often at a loss as to the best way to teach composition. It is a daunting task for professionals because students generally dislike the process and have been resistant to writing from the early grades. To further complicate the situation, over time, writing instruction in schools has shifted to an organic process, and I have found that students in high school still try to approach formal writing in the same way. They struggle with the idea that there are requirements in academic writing, such as supporting ideas with research-based facts and elaborating on the relationships between ideas. Even after explicit, repeated instruction, grammar, mechanics, and formatting, as well as paraphrasing/citation to avoid plagiarism remain a battle. Unfortunately, many teachers seem to be uncomfortable teaching grammar, which, to me, is a foundation of skilled writing. To assist teachers in better preparing students for college writing, it would be helpful if universities offered professional development workshops that scaffolded writing instruction from the early grades through high school. I often find that there is little consistency in how teachers, even within one grade in one school, teach writing. Perhaps instruction could be provided in best teaching practices, planning composition lessons, common verbiage, and college composition requirements at all grade levels.
I'm aware, but unfortunately my grade level focuses on one type of writing situation: a timed, argumentative or expository essay (AKA the On Demand). Due to the amount of accountability placed on standardized tests (I am also responsible for 2/3 accountability factors from the ACT) there are seldom opportunities in my curriculum to discuss and practice college-level writing strategies, or any writing that is bound to be polished and published over the course of a semester. You will find the majority of my colleagues agree. It's unfortunate, but I think you will find this lack of communication is not because of awareness of college conditions, but instead it is due to the increased focus on state standardized testing at the high-school level.
[no response]
I teach dual credit college English with WKCTC, so I have an advantage over most high school English teachers. I get to work with other dual credit teachers in several schools as well as instructors from WKCTC. I would love a best practices session with writing professors at MSU. That would be great.
knowing the expectations of college English classes and professors.
Regularly scheduled meetings between high school English teachers and first-year composition instructors would be very helpful, at least I hope so. It has been my observation that individual teachers vary in what is most important.


My students understand the expectations of college-level writing.
Respondents
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree
My students are prepared to write at an appropriate level for first-year college composition.
Respondents
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree
I am aware of the types of writing assignments assigned in college English composition classes.
Respondents
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree
I am aware of the types of reading assignments assigned in college English composition classes.
Respondents
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree
I am aware of the learning conditions of students taking college English composition classes.
Respondents
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree
I am aware of the working conditions for college-level English instructors in my area.
Respondents
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree



In one sentence, describe the fundamental qualities of college-level writing.
College-level writing should be clear and organized, reflect critical thinking, and adhere to formal writing standards and formatting.
College-level writing (academic writing) is focused, coherent, grammatically correct, and it should also display a student's ability to analyze and offer insight on the given topic.
Students have an obvious grasp of the assignment and display their understanding through a mature level of thought richly supported with concrete details, examples, etc. that is also cohesively organized (with an engaging introduction, graceful transitions, strong body paragraph development and a vigorous conclusion).
Students should be able to write an organized, coherent, structured, and concise essay that allows perspectives and points to be portrayed.

The writing style should be effective and appropriate to convey a clear sense of purpose.
Some fundamental qualities of college-level writing would include supporting and explaining a claim using evidence, using sources to synthesize, and analyzing the rhetorical techniques of a source.
Some of the fundamentals of college-level writing include skillfully avoiding plagiarism while integrating original thoughts with research, addressing a prompt with precision, and writing with voice.
College-level writing should be accurate, clear, and insightful.

What kinds of activities would help you increase your awareness of conditions in college English composition (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives)?
Seeing a syllabus for a college English composition class would be helpful, as well as collaborating with a teacher of a college English composition class.
I think actually meeting and creating a dialogue with college instructors would be beneficial. It would be helpful to hear their concerns about high school students, and learn what specific problems they are having with high school graduates. It would also be helpful to be able to have access to all of the above (objectives, assignments, paper prompts).
I'm not sure. Articulation meetings, maybe?
Well, a simple meet and greet would be nice. Often, however, these can turn into an ego-match that proves a juxtaposition to their intent.
Professional development time with college instructors and other high school teachers (formal or informal).
Sharing a syllabus or a list of assignments covered in a college-level English course could be beneficial to high school English teachers to ensure that our students have experience in the styles/activities (including writing and reading) they will encounter in the future.
Free or inexpensive cross-level professional development opportunities
[no response]

Appendix F: Complete Surveys – FYC Students

Shawnee Community College – ENG 111

Describe the two most significant challenges you have personally experienced in your college composition classes.
Finding the motivation to complete my work and maintaining interest on large projects
Long papers, perfect grammar.
Primarily memorizing MLA citation rules, but that's about it. Maybe some mindlessness in the language that should be used in essays (no: I, me, or you)
Personal Interaction Planning
I have experienced it being difficult to meet the requirements of how long the essays are supposed to be. I have also found myself procrastinating a lot.
Finding enough time to focus on the assigned paper rather than the reading assignments. Applying the reading to the paper assignments.
The paper requirements. And teachers not exsplaining things clearly.
The greatest challenges which I personally have faced in these courses are probably learning to research effectively (in terms of verifying the validity of information as well as making sure all source evidence is functional within an essay), and understanding logical fallacies as well as consciously avoiding them.
Learned to write an essay not a story.
writing essays
Homework and writing essays
getting work done outside of classes balancing home and school
MLA and epsohost
Homework , testing
Making the paper itself long enough; Having a desire to research the topics
English (I took an online english and I get very confused easily in the course because I don't have the one on one help) Keeping everything and due dates organized
Citing and making it to a conclusion
I think the struggle between transition from high school to college have made me a stronger person overall. Not just in college
Everything is piled on top of each other. Material seems like it changes a lot over the years.
1. Not having enough time to do my work 2. I can't remember to do Moodle assignments
Finding motivation to do the work when I am doing something else I enjoy. Finding legitimate sources when performing research for topics.

What are some ways that your high school teachers successfully prepared you to meet those challenges?
They helped me find ways to manage my time better
Slowly built our writing skills, taught us new writing skills, taught us new words and phrases.
Previous advice, maybe?
Group Work Giving us big things such as papers but helping us plan it out
They encouraged me to not put things off until the last minute.
[no response]
We were not prepared for college at all.
High school English teachers did take steps to prepare me for research writing by requiring the use of sources and citations, but the requirements were very lax. Non-credible sources could be cited, and citation formatting was only lightly emphasized - I likely turned in papers which were technically plagiarized or contained false information, and got A's on them. As for logical fallacy, my high school teachers never prepared me for them in any way. I never had more than a loose grasp on the concept of logical fallacies until my first college-level English class.
It has been over ten years since high school things have changed so I can not give you an answer that would aid in your research.
they taught me how to write essay better
Weekly essays and writing assignments
time management skills study skills

They taught us how research and prep us to how to write a decent paper.
I went to a lot of different high school
Independent research, lots of work
Were very strict on due dates
?
My high school counselor gave us tours of colleges we were interested in
They didn't prepare me well for any of this.
They reminded me constantly what was due and when. They also helped me revise my works.
Honestly, I could not say. I was not the best student in high school and it was 6 years ago.

Next, what are some ways that your high school teachers could have better prepared you to meet those challenges?
They could've been more stricter on the requirements of papers we had to write in class
Made us write longer papers and graded a little bit harder
More time spent on formatting and citations so it was easier memorized. It's not that bad, I can always look it up but it's more of a hassle than anything.
some teachers could have had more group work than others
they could have been more strict on making sure we stuck to the page requirements of the essay.
[no response]
Gave us more homework, more papers, etc. the longest paper I had to write for English was maybe 2 pages long. The first one in college was 5-7 pages long. I have no idea how to write a paper.
High school teachers can better prepare their students for these challenges simply by focusing on them more heavily. An argument written by a high school student should be held to the same level of scrutiny as any argument. Sources should be credible and correctly cited, information given should be relevant to the discussion and help to drive the author's point home, and fallacious arguments should be disallowed. I would suppose that a high school student who has no experience writing under these constraints might struggle with them, but teachers can offer revision periods. Once the students turn in their first drafts, let them know the mistakes they made. Give them an opportunity to correct them, then issue a grade only for final drafts. This will allow them to gain valuable experience which will serve them well as they head to college, where the issues of plagiarism and sufficient argument are taken far more seriously.
My answer would not aid in your research because it has been ten years plus.
made me write more essays
We should have written more research papers!
being not so easy going N/A
Give more details on how it works.
I wish I couldn't move around a lot
More research papers
Helped us learn to write papers more properly
?
Maybe letting us go to the bathroom without asking? That was a shock
Taught us all the formatting styles such as APA, which i use more than MLA at the moment.
They did a really good job as teachers, I wouldn't change a thing.
Having us write papers that required research. I do not recall writing these types of papers.

Describe the ways in which your English class writing assignments are different, comparing high school to college.
Different requirements and topics that I've never had to write about until college
In high school they were much more specific assignments rather than basically write whatever you want as long as it falls under a certain category.
More freedom but more requirements.
He doesn't baby us like high school teachers. Which is a good thing because boss's and company's wont hire you if they have to baby you all the time
They are different because a lot of writing assignments that I had in high school were not long papers or essays. In college that is mostly the only kind of writing assignments I have.
[no response]
Length Source requirements Time given for papers

In college, everything is done far more rigorously. High school English classes focused not on the writing itself, but making sure students were capable of using proper English mechanics. Once you reach college, however, it is assumed that all students have this knowledge, and the focus is instead turned to the student's capability of producing original and thoughtful work. Since this isn't nearly as important in high school classes, there is a great disconnect between high school level and college level English courses - what for many in high school was an easy class suddenly becomes one of the most difficult and time-consuming.
What I can remember we were not challenged as much.
more and longer essays have to be written
They were shorter in high school
there is a lot more writing of papers in college college is much more independent type work
The paper require a lot more detail and a lot more research.
Its easy because I don't move around a lot like I used to . I get more help with my homeworks
Many more writing assignments in College
The just around in subjects more, are longer, and get a lot more confusing.
Understandably more difficult
College English is so much more time consuming
They are graded harder. Not by our thoughts on the subject we are writing, but by the styles we use in writing on the topic. I feel it should be graded on quality not quantity.
In my high school AP English, we never had time in class to work on papers or anything. We actually have lab days in college, which I love.
More papers are required, as well as more research. I only remember writing papers about books we had read in class.

Shawnee Community College – ENG 112

Describe the two most significant challenges you have personally experienced in your college composition classes.
Papers and my teachers
1) Time management 2) Every English teacher wants something different and for you to write papers how they like them
Finding time to research and write my papers, outside of class.
Work Cite and how to do it.
creating the title of my essay's
Procrastination and Time Management
Studying and procrastinating

What are some ways that your high school teachers successfully prepared you to meet those challenges?
Citations
They didn't. I had a new English teacher every year since 8th grade. I felt like I was not prepared whatsoever
They gave us more class time for our school work.
I was not prepared.
how to write a essay correctly
They didn't since I didn't have that problem before.
My math teacher has taught me everything that my current math class is covering

Next, what are some ways that your high school teachers could have better prepared you to meet those challenges?
College teachers don't help as much with papers as high school teachers
They could have taught mla format and how to structure papers
They should have made us work more outside of class, because college "work is a lot of out of class work.
Teaching more college advance things my senior year.
tutoring us mainly
They could've given us tips I guess
Prepared me for listening to a lecture

Describe the ways in which your English class writing assignments are different, comparing high school to college.
Slim to no assignments
We actually have papers to type. I never had to type a paper in high school
Harder, more detailed, stricter..
No format just a typed paper.
essay's are much longer
They are pretty much the same to me just different teachers and assignments along with students
They are longer and more in depth

Murray State University – ENG 105

Describe the two most significant challenges you have personally experienced in your college composition classes.
Coming up with topics to write about for the papers.
Making it to class and remembering to do my work.
One of my biggest struggle is being a already weak writer and the second reason is that I am stubborn when it comes to asking for help so I try to solve something that I don't understand myself
Successful researching and length of essays.
Procrastination and grammar
-Studying
Remembering when things are due and understanding how to do the homework
Sometimes I find it hard to get myself to be interested. I also have the issue of doubting everything I do.
Being able to realize what I need to do and actually do it
I guess I would say focusing on the task at hand at an early stage
Time management, willpower
Not knowing many people to study with Difficult professors
Much more in depth work. More studying involved in order to succeed.
Getting my papers long enough. Getting enough good sources.
Writing long papers
Time management and paper length
having more freedom, and trying to stay focused on my work.
The professor is very picky and the papers are long.
Staying focused in class and making sure I make it to class on time for my earlier classes.
Being on time and being a lot more responsible.
I havent experienced any challenges really
Writing the assigned papers has been challenging for me. Specifically sounding professional, paper composition, and grammar has been a struggle.
Time management and trying to study.
Time management with all my classes homework and studying.
Writing about our physical service site and retaining focus.

What are some ways that your high school teachers successfully prepared you to meet those challenges?
I took AP Lang in high school and structurly the class is very similar.
By enforcing common core
I don't believe that they prepared me for those challenges other then peer review and a lot of my English classes didn't care about how you write unless you meet these curtain standards
Practice using credible sources
I graduated in 2003, so it's hard for me to remember any specific tools given to me by my high school teachers.
How to study the right way.
They did not really prepare us for the challenges we would face in college.
Had to take a college success class and a career planning class.
They gave me experience with the subject and gave me tips on how to do things the most efficient ways

There are none
Understanding assignments and asking questions when nessesary
Took college level classes in high school
None whatsoever
By writing a lot of papers and requiring good sources.
They didn't
They had checkpoints on our papers. So for a 5 page paper we would turn in half of the paper about a week before the deadline. For paper length there's not much you can do to prepare for that.
they didn't really.
The teachers in my high school made sure I knew MLA format and how to write an essay.
Making sure you go to bed on time
Teaching that being late will resort to missing work & being an adult comes with a more responsibility.
they didnt
My high school teachers highly stressed citation formatting, and grammar usage so I was able to better deal with these challenges.
Giving us homework with due dates.
They lectured and had us take our own notes.
AP classes provided me with timed writings and extra critiquing of my writing.

Next, what are some ways that your high school teachers could have better prepared you to meet those challenges?
Personally my teacher did a fairly good job preparing us in my opinion.
Been more strict on due dates.
They could've helped break these challenges if they raised that sandards and did more peer review
Write longer essays and not just persuasive ones.
Putting more emphasis on grammar.
[no response]
Showing us examples of what college would expect of us.
My high school teachers could of been more effective in their teaching.
Gave me tips and tricks on how college takes a balance between social life and academic life and when to know to lean a little bit one way on the scale
I think this is more of a personal problem that I, myself need to overcome
Time management skills, how to maintain good grades with online assignments
They could of been harder teachers
Could have better explained how much different college was going to be instead of just saying, "it's going to be hard."
Doing a more diverse range of types of papers such as synthesis.
Everything
N/A
not giving us that many second chances to turn in homework.
They could have talked more about persuasive writing and analyzing a written work to determine whether or not it was good or not. (editorial analysis)
n/a
My teachers did a great job.
taught real life propblems instead of things that I will never use again
I feel that my teachers prepared me very well for these challenges and could not have done any better.
Making classes more like college classes.
Gave us shorter deadlines.
More applied/direct subject writing, less open/free time in high school classes

Describe the ways in which your English class writing assignments are different, comparing high school to college.
In college there is more writing assignment due in a smaller amount of time so the pressure to get it done is more so than high school.
It is more open minded and let students gather their own thoughts instead of preloading them with what they want.

The difference between Highschool and college assignments is that high school teaches you English versus college expects you to know how to write and communicate and briefly go over certain aspects of writing
College assignments have been much longer, with much more extensive research. Also higher expectations and harsher, yet accurate, grading.
I can't remember.
The discussion boards are a lot different and everything is online.
In high school the my English class would have prompts for us to write and we would either spend the whole class writing or reading in our reading books. Whereas here I have a service learning class where I have to go out in the community and help and then write about my experience.
These assignments are different to my high school assignments because we are writing about issues we face in our service site rather then writing about a book we've read.
College has very strict dating and there usually is no late work at all, high school was more lenient had a lot more breaks in the loads of work.
To be honest they are just a big longer at the moment and require me to be a bit more in depth and detail.
In highschool we did assignments in class and if they were late we could turn them in the next day but in college we do everything outside of class time and if we are late for the assignment we get a 0
The writing assignments in college have built on the the following paper. Like you keep adding on to one paper to make a big paper
High school writing was so basic. Little effort needed in order to get an A. At my high school, I only wrote one short 2-3 page research paper per year. In college, each paper has to be skillfully thought out and planned. It has to be written carefully and slowly over a week or two and revised many times by either yourself or peers in order to achieve the best grade possible.
There were more specific formatting and more specific objectives you had to meet.
They are longer and harder
The types of writing are not different or more difficult, but the workload is much different. We might have 1 or 2 papers semester, while in college we have 1 or 2 every month.
a lot more open thinking, and going your own way opposed to as a class.
The assignments are much longer, have different topics and objectives, and are generally harder to succeed on because the professor is picky.
They only thing that is different is the length of the essays and writing assignments.
They are not explained very well.
they are much shorter
My high school English class writing assignment have been very similar to my college English assignments. I actually wrote many of the same type of papers. However, I never wrote an annotated bibliography. This may be due to the fact that my teacher was a former Murray State professor.
In high school I was able to pick my topics whereas in college I do not.
We have short deadlines and longer assignments.
High school assigned me less thought-out assignments(and lots of them), while college has a stronger focus and structured writings.

Murray State University – ENG 150

Describe the two most significant challenges you have personally experienced in your college composition classes.
Learning to manage my time properly so that I finish all of my assignments on time. Learning to study properly for a variety of subjects has also been a challenge.
I had never written research papers before and had never completed so many writing assignments in such a short time frame.
The amount of writing required, The amount of reading that is required.
Completing papers on time and actually going to class at 8am
The hardest challenges were creating more complex thoughts and sentences that were being supported by sources as well writing in different ways.
In my college composition class, I struggle with finding a solid topic to write about, as there are sometimes very vague instructions. I also struggle with making my language within my pieces sophisticated and "college level."
English is not my first language Writing papers

The two most significant challenges I have experienced in my college composition class is creating effective transition statements between paragraphs and making sure that I incorporate literary devices into my writing.
1) Completing the length required for the assignment 2) Creating the document with the correct formatting 3) Researching quality scholarly journals 4) Writing using grammar that is adequate for college

What are some ways that your high school teachers successfully prepared you to meet those challenges?
Giving a variety of assignment types to help prepare me for some of the work I have/will encounter in college.
They gave me very detailed feedback on my papers in order to improve my writing.
They taught us how to make good works cited pages, to use in text citations, and they had us read at higher levels with similar books to what we are reading now.
They encouraged us to take dual credit classes at a community college, so I already had experience in college level courses before Murray
They did successfully prepared me for me for college writing. I did a lot of on-demand writing which allowed me to persevere.
I feel that my high school teachers did a great job of exposing me to high level reading and thinking about topics on a deeper level, which gave me the ability to view things from multiple angles. This gives me more to possibly write about.
Reading different passages Wrote a lot of papers
My high school teachers successfully prepared me to meet these challenges by helping me organize my writing effectively, and by teaching me what rhetorical devices are and how to incorporate them into my papers.
1) Most of my high school writing assignments were in MLA format, so I had a good functional knowledge of the format. 2) Some research was involved in the assignments

Next, what are some ways that your high school teachers could have better prepared you to meet those challenges?
I feel like high school teachers could give more homework. College is 25% what you do in class and 75% how you reinforce what you've learned outside of class. It's overwhelming at points because of the contrast between the amounts of out-of-class work given at my high school and at Murray state.
They should have had us write more research papers, since that is what I've encountered most in college.
They could have increased the work load and had us talk about the level that our writing would need to be at when we arrived here and all of the expectations our professors would have.
Certain teachers did not know how to effectively convey information so that students understood
They could have allowed me to pick and choose topics that I would have enjoyed more.
I feel that my high school teachers could have better prepared me for the college level writing by giving me better strategies for choosing a writing topic, and by teaching more ways to make my writing sound more concise and professional.
Should go over what are the different way to make a better writers and give example
My high school teachers could have better prepared me to meet these challenges by pushing me harder in class and not being so lenient when it came to writing papers.
1) Assigned longer writing assignments (5-7 pages) 2) Teaching more grammar and word usage

Describe the ways in which your English class writing assignments are different, comparing high school to college.
It is expected that more research and overall time be put into college English assignments. My English professor also encourages us to proper writing procedures such as creating outline and revising papers for resubmission.
They use more primary and scholarly sources.
College assignments are longer, graded harder, and seem to take double the time in writing as well as preparing that high school papers did.
College English classes are more structured with assignments but also more open ended for students
They aren't vastly different besides the fact that English has broader topics.
In college writing assignments, there are less parameters and restrictions. This is stressful for me because it is hard for me to choose a direction to take the paper.
College class is more fast pace so it's require student work hard inside and outside of class
In college, I get a lot more assignments and it is rather difficult to manage writing large papers when I have so many other things to do in the other classes that I am taking. In high school, I rarely got writing assignments and when I did, they were not very long.

In high school my papers were never really required to be lengthy. I believe I never wrote more than 5 pages in high school. Also, the assignments in college are much more primary research based.

Shawnee Community College - Respondents by High School

High School Name	City	State	Respondents
Anna-Jonesboro Community High School	Anna	IL	8
Massac County High School	Metropolis	IL	8
Shawnee High School	Wolf Lake	IL	3
Century Junior/Senior High School	Ullin	IL	2
Joppa High School	Joppa	IL	2
Meridian High School	Mounds	IL	2
Dyersburg High School	Dyersburg	TN	1
Frankfort Community High School	West Frankfort	IL	1
Living Hope Fellowship Christian School	Karnak	IL	1

Murray State University - Respondents by High School

High School Name	City	State	Respondents
McCracken County High School	Paducah	KY	2
Murray High School	Murray	KY	2
New Tech Institute	Evansville	IN	2
Adlai Stevenson High School	Sterling Heights	MI	1
Allen County-Scottsville High School	Scottsville	KY	1
Ansbach Middle/High School (USDOD)	Ansbach	Germany	1
Ballard Memorial High School	Barlow	KY	1
Bardstown High School	Bardstown	KY	1
Boonville High School	Boonville	IN	1
Boyle County High School	Danville	KY	1
J. Graham Brown School	Louisville	KY	1
Cape Central High School	Cape Girardeau	MO	1
Commonwealth Charter Academy	Harrisburg	PA	1
Edwardsville High School	Edwardsville	IL	1
Fern Creek High School	Louisville	KY	1
Henderson County High School	Henderson	KY	1
Henry County High School	Paris	TN	1
Highland High School	Highland	IL	1
Marshall County High School	Benton	KY	1
Massac County High School	Metropolis	IL	1
Mater Dei Catholic High School	Evansville	IN	1
Meade County High School	Brandenberg	KY	1
North Side High School	Jackson	TN	1
O'Fallon Township High School	O'Fallon	IL	1
Paducah Tilghman High School	Paducah	KY	1
South Fulton High School	South Fulton	TN	1
Todd County Central High School	Elkton	KY	1
Triad High School	Troy	IL	1
University City High School	University City	MO	1

Appendix G: Interview Transcripts

Murray State University Instructor

Interviewer: Zachary Garrett
Location: 104 South 4th Street, Vienna, Illinois
Interviewee: MSU Instructor
Location: Faculty Hall, Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky
Date: 16 January 2019

Begin Transcription

MSU Instructor: 00:08 Hello?
Interviewer: 00:09 Hello?
MSU Instructor: 00:10 Hey.
Interviewer: 00:11 Hey. This is Zach.
MSU Instructor: 00:13 Yes, how are you?
Interviewer: 00:14 Oh, pretty good. Just a second, I'm getting my stuff set up here.
MSU Instructor: 00:20 Okay, go right ahead.
Interviewer: 00:22 Okay. All right, I think I got it. All right, well how have things been?
MSU Instructor: 00:27 Okay. Busy, but that's not nothing new.
Interviewer: 00:30 Yeah, that's usually how it goes.
MSU Instructor: 00:31 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
Interviewer: 00:36 Cool, well I guess I'll go ahead and get started so we-
MSU Instructor: 00:38 Okay.
Interviewer: 00:38 Use our time well here. This is a recorded interview, as you saw in the thing I sent you. I'm going to start by asking, if you give your consent, that I can record this interview.
MSU Instructor: 00:55 I do give my consent for you to interview me and record it.
Interviewer: 00:59 Okay, have you received and read the consent letter I emailed you?
MSU Instructor: 01:05 I have received it and read it, or at least I scanned it.
Interviewer: 01:08 Okay, you probably seen one almost exactly like it.
MSU Instructor: 01:12 I have seen them before. I have written them, yes. I understand. I feel like I'm in no imminent danger.
Interviewer: 01:19 Good, this is a very low risk activity. Anyway-
MSU Instructor: 01:25 I'm going to be traumatized by the end of it.
Interviewer: 01:27 Yeah, exactly. Well you know, it depends on how I write it up. Anyway, what I'm going to do is I'm going to kind of get started by telling you the sorts of topics I'm going to cover. You basically know them if you saw my survey, but the purpose of the interview is to supplement the result of the survey. So, survey results can be very useful because you reach out and you get a lot of people, but you don't get a lot of depth. So I'm using interviews to supplement that.
MSU Instructor: 01:57 Right, mm-hmm (affirmative).
Interviewer: 01:58 This interview covers areas of inquiry that include your background and your beliefs about yourself as a teacher, about PD [professional development], about the differences between high school and college, about student preparedness and what you think would help solve some of those problems that you may see. If you don't see them, then you can tell me that too.
Interviewer: 02:24 I'm going to start by asking you just to introduce yourself and briefly describe what your professional background is.
MSU Instructor: 02:31 Okay, I'm <MSU Instructor>. Professional background, I've been a Professor at Murray State University for [redacted]. Before that, I taught at <midwestern university> for four years. My graduate work is from the <southeastern university A>. I got my PhD and my MA both in English from there. My undergraduate work is from <southeastern university B>. And I have a degree [redacted]
MSU Instructor: 03:06 I'm originally from <southeastern state>. Professionally, I've published several articles on Composition Theory and Composition Practice, and two textbooks in Composition Practice. My area of specialty is Rhetoric and Composition, but I have minor areas in Early American Literature and 19th Century British Literature. I never really get to teach it, but I do teach Early American Lit both at the undergraduate and graduate level on a fairly regular basis.

MSU Instructor: 03:47 I attend conferences usually on average one a year, and they range from Literature to Composition, to Administrative information. For instance, I just got back from the Accrediting Agency Conference SACS ... well, it's actually SACS COC. It's the accrediting agency for all of the South Central US colleges and universities. So I'm interested in sort of administrative things. From an unusual perspective, I do not want to be an Administrator necessarily, but I a few years ago actually edited the entire university's accrediting document. That got me interested in going to this conference.

MSU Instructor: 04:41 What I really about the conference is that it pays for room and board, basically, which is really unusual. I try to go to it when they'll accept me to speak because they pay for a room for one night, they pay a day of per diem, and they pay registration, which as you know from going to conferences, is getting more and more expensive. I've recently published two articles in Literature, which is a first for me. I did one in a text called [redacted], and it's looking at the dark side [redacted], and I look [redacted] They are [redacted].

MSU Instructor: 05:26 The most recent thing, I was published in the [redacted] for a paper that I actually presented at an [redacted] several years ago. They've just now got around to getting it published.

Interviewer: 05:42 Awesome.

MSU Instructor: 05:43 Yeah, I'm kind of excited about those because that's sort of branching into new territory for me, because everything I'd done up to that point was Composition.

Interviewer: 05:53 [redacted]

MSU Instructor: 05:59 [redacted]

Interviewer: 06:00 [redacted]

MSU Instructor: 06:03 [redacted]

Interviewer: 06:03 [redacted]

MSU Instructor: 06:07 [redacted]

Interviewer: 06:07 [redacted]

MSU Instructor: 06:10 [redacted]

Interviewer: 06:12 [redacted]

MSU Instructor: 06:12 [redacted]

Interviewer: 06:14 [redacted]

MSU Instructor: 06:16 [redacted]

Interviewer: 06:19 [redacted]

MSU Instructor: 06:25 [redacted]

Interviewer: 06:26 [redacted] Okay, just to follow up from that, do you consider that you have a teaching philosophy, and if so, briefly what is it? How do you express the value of your work?

MSU Instructor: 06:45 Yes, I think ... Well, we're all kind of forced to by the process of going through the tenure process. We kind of are forced to have an official teaching philosophy that we submit. I have not articulated it in a long time. Probably, I would change what I had when I went through the process just because I'm older and hopefully a little wiser now. I think learning should be fun. I think it should be interesting. I don't necessarily always have an interesting class. Particularly, my Composition class. I'm kind of disappointed with the way I've been doing it lately.

MSU Instructor: 07:27 I do feel like it should be a fairly non-threatening environment. I think people learn better when they're not threatened and when they're comfortable, when they feel like they can ask questions and they won't get their heads bit off. I like what I do, and I hope that they get some energy from me because of that. I genuinely love my students. I don't mean that in any kind of perverted way. Once I get to know them, it feels like a really close relationship like I'm their mom sort of. I hope they also get some energy from that, that someone here at the university cares for them and wants to see them succeed.

MSU Instructor: 08:20 Generally, really I focus my Composition class on a sort of a career-based approach. I really kind of do that with all of mine. I'm always trying to think, like for instance, in the class you had, how can we turn the work they're doing into conference presentations because that really truly is the name of the game. In order to get a job when you get through the process of the degree, you need to have some of those on your resume. It's just what you do. So I do it in Composition in terms of having them basically research the job they want to have, and go and interview someone who's in that field because it forces to think about how they would spend their day to day work life.

MSU Instructor: 09:06 We spend so much time at work, I think it's good to know and have a heads up ahead of time, about what the day to day life is like in that career field because you may hate it. It's good to know it ahead of time so you can go in a different direction before you spend years devoted to something that you wind up hating. I'm speaking from experience, because that happened to me. There are things I wish that people had told

me when I was in college, that no one ever told me. I try to be pretty blunt with the students and tell them what the workforce is like, at least from what I've seen.
MSU Instructor: 09:43 I try to encourage them to find out what it is in their particular area now, so that if it doesn't feel like something they want, then they can change without too much penalty especially as freshmen. I've actually had some who've changed their majors because of doing that preliminary leg work. I think that to me is a sign of success of the class. Not that I'm trying to discourage people, but they can find out where they best belong at the earliest possible time. That way, they can start directing their coursework in the direction that ultimately they're going to wind up anyway.
Interviewer: 10:31 Okay, that's cool. That's like being focused on the actual stated needs of your real life students. In my Comp class, I always start things by asking them why they are there, not necessarily in my class but while they're in college.
MSU Instructor: 10:50 Mm-hmm (affirmative), right.
Interviewer: 10:51 A lot of times it has to do with work, or whatever, and it doesn't necessarily have to do with the more abstract things that we think of when we think of why college matters. So that's really cool.
MSU Instructor: 11:02 Yeah, I mean we want them to have those, but realistically, they want a job when they get done. Their parents want them to have a job when they get done. Everybody involved, we want them to have jobs when they get done so I just have been using this approach for at least probably a decade now. I tinker with it a little bit, but I come back to it because I just find it ... If they're not interested in their future career, I don't know anything that they would be interested in.
MSU Instructor: 11:38 If they're not interested in that future career, then they're in the wrong career field. If they can't find a passion about that, then they need to look around and find something else. I think part of what makes writing effective is having a passion about it, and being interested in doing the research for it. If I go with career, then that's almost like an automatic interest for them. It also gets away from sort of the tried, and the papers that they did in high school, and the things that I don't want to read quite honestly. I don't want to read about current issues. I just don't.
MSU Instructor: 12:27 I would much rather read about an interview they conducted with a faculty member, and they found out that they will be writing every single day and because of that, they don't want to major in that field. Real interesting kind of stuff comes out of what they do.
Interviewer: 12:43 I actually told my students this on Monday. I'm like, "Please don't write a paper about gun control or school uniforms or whatever, if you don't really care about it."
MSU Instructor: 12:52 Yeah, because if they don't care, you're sure not going to. It's going to be so bland. I'm not interested in that anymore, you know. I guess I've read way too many papers. Now I'm at that point where I'm about at the overload area of how many more papers I can grade in my career. I want them to be different, something interesting and personal, and makes sense to me, and not just gobbly gook.
Interviewer: 13:25 Okay, that's really cool. All right, so that helps. I'm going to move on to the section of professional development. This one's going to be just a little more general about the institution. Describe the opportunities for professional development that are provided at Murray State University or by the university.
MSU Instructor: 13:47 We have a lot of actual opportunities. We have the one office that their whole goal is to professionalize teachers on campus. I can't even think of the name of the office now, but ... I went to the Blitz Week thing that we had last week, was sponsored by them. They do a lot of things both online and on campus, more than you could possibly have time to do. There's that.
MSU Instructor: 14:20 As a department, we have maybe on average one thing a semester where we're actually providing training. [redacted]
Interviewer: 14:39 [redacted]
MSU Instructor: 14:42 [redacted]
MSU Instructor: 15:16 But I do hope to have one or a two a semester where we sit around and talk about strategies and techniques for improving how we teach Composition. [redacted] There's also the opportunity for travel abroad professional opportunities. There are some where you basically just go on a trip, then there are some where you teach abroad. I think that's a really important professional development. I have never taken advantage of it, but I think a lot of our faculty do, and it's a really good opportunity to get that.
MSU Instructor: 15:50 Then we also have opportunities for people to teach in the summer at the various honors academies and things like that. So there's quite a bit of, I think, professional development. I don't think we have as much for adjuncts and part-time people as we probably need.

Interviewer: 16:09 Sometimes there's the challenge of getting them to do it, because they're sometimes doing something else.
MSU Instructor: 16:14 Right, and what benefit other than just their own curiosity and their own willingness to learn because they're probably not going to get paid for it. They're not going to get paid extra for doing it. No one is going to recognize the fact that they're doing it. It's just for their own personal professional development, really. Their own personal growth. And finding time, in fact, just this initial meeting I'm getting ready to set up today for Composition next week, it's like I know that I'm going to offer it two times, a Thursday and a Friday, or something like that, just because adjuncts aren't going to come in, and I can't blame them, on days when they're not supposed to be here.
MSU Instructor: 16:57 I'm probably going to have one late in the afternoon simply because a lot of our adjuncts teach at night. I don't want to inconvenience them by trying to have something in the day time, because I'm not going to reach that group. That's a probably with professional development, is finding the time. Of course, you know technology has made it much easier to do, because you can join in on web and things like that, Zoom, or Skype or something, and see what people are doing without actually having to physically be here.
MSU Instructor: 17:29 Whether or not I'll get that set up, is unlikely. I'm not that technologically savvy, but it is a possibility now.
Interviewer: 17:37 Okay. Yeah, that does help. The thing that I'm developing here actually involves some of that stuff, which I'm probably only a couple of steps ahead of you on that because [crosstalk] be there. Okay, so moving on to the differences between high school and college. Explain what your understanding is of the high school English classroom, especially when it comes to writing and reading assignments.
MSU Instructor: 18:03 I think they probably read more literature than they do in our English Comp class, or at least in mine, just literature. I think they do more of that. I don't think they read as many essays, and I don't think the focus is as much of analytical reading of just having them become better academic readers and writers. I think that they do a lot of literary analysis in the writing assignments based on what my students have told me. There's nothing wrong with that, it's just I think it has limited application for the Pre-Med major for instance, or whatever.
MSU Instructor: 18:49 We want them all to be humanized, I don't mean that. It really sounds like I'm trying to turn the university into a technical school, but realistically, they need skills at reading, academic writing, and reading academic essays, and understanding nuance, and understanding sarcasm, understanding in depth arguments, and then being able to write in response to that. I'm sure some of that goes on in some high schools, but based on what my students have told me, they do a lot of literary analysis if they write at all. It just depends on how good the high school is that they're coming from.
MSU Instructor: 19:36 I do have some students who say they really don't write in high school. I think there's a wide variety.
Interviewer: 19:41 Yeah, some of my survey results with the students come out with that.
MSU Instructor: 19:46 Yeah.
Interviewer: 19:47 Moving to that, what do you know about the teaching strategies that high school teachers use to teach writing from your perspective as a college professor?
MSU Instructor: 19:56 I think that they probably do a lot of the parts of an essay. Like okay, so your introduction needs to have this, this and this. You need to have your three main body ideas. We need to develop it this way. In fact, throughout most of my teaching at the college level, I found that most students generally have a decent idea of how an essay should kind of hold together. I'm much more interested in that they have a fluid style. I don't think style is covered all that much.
MSU Instructor: 20:38 I mean, realistically, who has time? But to me, that's what makes those students' writing stand out is when they have a personal flair with the writing. I think there are specific strategies that you can teach that, but it often just doesn't happen, or it just doesn't take. Students don't see how they could get excited about some of that nit-picky coherence and cohesion, and how it can just turn a whole paragraph around. That does not interest them at all, like it does me.
MSU Instructor: 21:11 I've kind of forgotten what your question was.
Interviewer: 21:13 It was basically teaching strategies that high school teachers use-
MSU Instructor: 21:17 Oh, okay.
Interviewer: 21:18 And how they might differ from yours. Some of those things, from what I have talked to people about so far, have to do with the different demands that high school teachers have upon them. If you have so many hundred students a semester or whatever, then you're obviously not going to be grading long papers or whatever.
MSU Instructor: 21:36 And they turn those things over like overnight. I don't know how they do it. I really don't know how they do it. The sheer numbers of students they deal with, it really is amazing. I see that they deal more with the parts, and that kind of lends itself to writing the shorter essays, right? For instance, I want you to

turn in an introductory paragraph. Now, I occasionally do that myself, and have them do mini parts of the assignment so that there are fewer surprises at the end of a long paper.
MSU Instructor: 22:10 I find myself kind of doing that, but I don't teach it. I just say, "Turn in two to three paragraphs." I feel like they probably are spending more time saying, "Okay, here's how to develop a paragraph." I don't know that they do that. That's just my gut reaction. Like I said, most of them come to us with a decent understanding of what an essay is. In fact, some of them are so ingrained of the five paragraph format, especially in honors, I find that part of my job is to deconstruct that five paragraph format and give them a little more leeway and freedom.
MSU Instructor: 22:47 They are so ingrained in being a good student, that they don't even think about becoming a better writer, especially a better stylistic writer. I do think that a lot of high school teachers probably use peer review in small groups. I do know that they probably use a lot of those KWL kind of strategies. I think they use more buzz wordy type of teaching than we do, simply because we don't even take education classes, or most of us never have.
Interviewer: 23:25 Right, I've been to a conference where they are talking to high school teachers in a session, and they're like, "Well, what does that mean? I've never heard of that before."
MSU Instructor: 23:33 Yeah, right. Yeah.
Interviewer: 23:35 Okay, briefly, what do you know about the standards and objectives that the high school teachers have to meet in the sense that they differ from your own?
MSU Instructor: 23:45 Yeah, well, I know in Kentucky they have so many rigid requirements in the core standards, and all those sorts of things. That just would not work for college teachers who value their academic freedom so much. I do think that they are under a lot of pressure to get the students to score well on standardized exams. For a long time, they had to do well on the portfolio system in Kentucky, and they needed to get a certain percentage at the proficient level and so forth, and et cetera. I think that they have a lot more pressure on them than we do. I think that they are expected to perform. I think they are expected to have their students perform.
MSU Instructor: 24:39 Sometimes it's, like I said, standardized exams. I guess in some places, they're still doing writing and evaluating essay level writing sort of holistically. To be honest, I don't know what all they're doing in Kentucky anymore, because I don't think they do the portfolio system like they did. I feel like they have a lot more pressure to perform than we do.
Interviewer: 25:10 Okay.
MSU Instructor: 25:12 How was that for a quotable quote?
Interviewer: 25:13 Yeah. That actually fits with a lot of stuff that I basically have already found, too. So that's good. That's very helpful to fill that out some. Moving on to student preparedness real quick, I would like you to compare and contrast your high achieving students and you perceived their preparation for college-level writing whenever they started your first Composition class. Compare that to your low achieving students and their preparedness. You can define those terms however you want, but how do you find that they are prepared for the demands that you put on them in that class?
MSU Instructor: 25:57 All right, here's this understanding that the last year or two, every time I've taught Composition, it's with honors students. They generally are well prepared. Not all of them are as good writers as others, but to be honest with you, the things that sets the lower achievers part more than anything is under-performance. I mean, not coming to class, not turning in the work, turning in halfhearted work. It's more time management and lack of doing the work that makes them under-performing, because almost all of them are really bright and capable.
MSU Instructor: 26:44 Most of them come from pretty strong academic background, because they're in our honors program. They're bright, or they've placed well on ACT or SAT exams. Even within the honors classroom, there is a pretty marked difference between the really solid writers and the average writers. From that perspective, many of them aren't all that different than the traditional Composition classroom in terms of their actual writing ability, because many of them are Pre-Med and Pre-Law, and pre-graduate program.
MSU Instructor: 27:29 They may be really strong in the math and the science area, and really not that strong in humanities. Even though it's an honors class, most of their work ethic is better than a traditional Composition classroom, but not all. This past semester was the worst I've ever had in terms of students not coming to class, not doing their work. And these are honors students. I was blown away by how many weren't doing the work. It's a new trend. But there are some who really do stand out, and it's not just their work ethic, they just have a really good writing style and they know how to construct a good essay. Most of them are average writers.
Interviewer: 28:21 Okay, yeah I had an interesting semester last semester too. I had a, among other things, a student [redacted] That was an interesting semester.
MSU Instructor: 28:35 Yeah, yeah.
Interviewer: 28:36 Anyway, so moving on to the last one here-
MSU Instructor: 28:39 Not good. Not good at all.

Interviewer: 28:40 Yeah. No, not good.
MSU Instructor: 28:41 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
Interviewer: 28:42 What kind of activities do you think would increase your awareness of conditions in high school English? Some examples that I give of that, that you probably saw in the survey, were writing assignments, reading assignments, learning conditions, understanding them, working conditions, pedagogical strategies, knowledge of standards and objectives. What kind of activities do you think would help increase your awareness of those conditions?
MSU Instructor: 29:05 I think we probably should visit high school classrooms.
Interviewer: 29:08 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
MSU Instructor: 29:09 I think high school teachers should visit our classrooms. I think high school students should probably visit our classrooms, and just sit in on for 20 minutes and see what the atmosphere is like. If nothing else, I think it would be for us to have conversations. I did have a few meetings [redacted] many years ago where I had a few at night where I actually invited the local high school teachers to come in and sit down together and talk about your needs and what you would like to know about what we do and vice versa.
MSU Instructor: 29:50 I think sitting in a room together and talking would be a really good thing. I don't know if it will happen. I had not really even thought about doing it until just then, but maybe I should do some of that as Comp Director.
Interviewer: 30:03 One of the pieces of research I'm using for my project was actually a collaborative project between City University in New York and New York City high schools. It's called Looking Both Ways, if you ever find it. I found it wasn't used very much, but they actually produced a little book out of it. One of the things that they expressed in there was ... One of the most revealing things was visiting one another's spaces.
Interviewer: 30:31 They talked about things like the smells and the noise, and all this kind of stuff. [crosstalk]-
MSU Instructor: 30:36 Yeah, when you walk in and the whole building smells like lunch.
Interviewer: 30:40 Yeah, and you don't get that any other way other than just to go do it. That's really interesting. That was one of the things that struck me the most from that thing, was they found that so valuable.
MSU Instructor: 30:51 Yeah, and I had been a substitute teacher. I've never taken an education class, but I did do substitute teaching. It showed me what a horrible way to make a living that is. I don't want to work in high schools. I just don't. I've visited ... We used to have the Road Scholars Program; I think we've re-instituted it [Note: this is a program that brings MSU faculty and staff to a high school to talk about college; the name of the program is a play on the Rhodes Scholarship for American students at Oxford University. It has indeed been reinstituted]. But visiting those classrooms, I have really desire to work with that age group at all.
Interviewer: 31:14 Well that's part of why I saw myself through graduate school.
MSU Instructor: 31:17 Mm-hmm (affirmative), right. Yeah.
Interviewer: 31:19 Same boat.
MSU Instructor: 31:19 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
Interviewer: 31:22 [redacted]
MSU Instructor: 31:34 [redacted]
Interviewer: 31:34 [redacted]
MSU Instructor: 31:35 You know, let me add this, in the last two weeks I've been in a lot of meetings, and I keep hearing a whole lot about Dual Credit.
Interviewer: 31:45 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
MSU Instructor: 31:47 I think it's ... I don't know, it's really very ... I mean, I've heard it on multiple occasions in multiple meetings with multiple types of people. Apparently it's a new really up and coming thing that we're dealing with here on this campus. I don't know what that's going to do. I think it actually hurts Composition classroom numbers, because people are taking it when they're in high school.
Interviewer: 32:17 Yep.
MSU Instructor: 32:20 The teachers at that ... They are getting their instruction from essentially high school teachers for their college-level classes. I don't know, I just think that that's something that we're going to be grappling with, and I don't know. I was just really surprised over the course of the last two weeks how many times Dual Credit keeps popping it's head up. In fact, I was in a [redacted] yesterday, and we are looking at a graduate certificate in Dual Credit instruction.
Interviewer: 32:54 Yeah, I took the ... what was it? The Teaching Dual Credit course over the summer. It was for [redacted] just because partially I was just curious about what it was all about. I know that it's something that even if obviously I don't do it, I'm going to need to know about it in the future.
MSU Instructor: 33:21 Right, yeah.
Interviewer: 33:21 It's kind of a new area where you don't know what you're going to get because of the attitude that some people have toward it. What I've seen from the students' perspective, and even some of their

teachers and parents, the attitude is you should do this thing because you "get it out of the way" and you're like, oh, I don't want you just to get it out of the way.
MSU Instructor: 33:38 Right, yeah.
Interviewer: 33:40 I want you to have a positive attitude toward it. If you have that attitude then that means that we've failed to communicate the importance of it to you or whatever.
MSU Instructor: 33:48 And if you get it out of the way, according to this particular school's idea, then how is that going to harm you if you go to another school that's more demanding of their writing? You know what I'm saying?
Interviewer: 34:00 Yeah.
MSU Instructor: 34:01 Yeah, that is kind of dangerous.
Interviewer: 34:05 Administrators in the colleges, or at least in the community colleges, are extremely enthusiastic about it because it helps people graduate.
MSU Instructor: 34:12 Mm-hmm (affirmative), right.
Interviewer: 34:15 It's an interesting development because you have a lot of high school teachers teaching them, and they don't participate in the life of the college. [redacted] and there's no communication there.
MSU Instructor: 34:36 Yeah, it's just a different environment.
Interviewer: 34:39 Mm-hmm (affirmative). That is something that I think will be interesting to address in the future, and it actually kind of has some overlap of what I'm doing here because that is ... those are teachers that very specifically have a leg in both worlds that they usually are more one thing than the other.
MSU Instructor: 35:01 Well, it's more that they have a leg in the high school and they have a toe-
Interviewer: 35:05 Yeah, I-
MSU Instructor: 35:06 In the university. They are not a part of the culture. It may not be a good thing necessarily to be a part of this culture, but it's just different. I think it's an issue that we are going to have to start thinking about. Online teaching is another one.
Interviewer: 35:25 Thanks for bringing that up because that will find it's way into my write up. That's a very important thing. When we talk about this in our small groups or whatever and our Capstone Project Class, some people have brought that up. They've actually brought that up as an area of weakness in my write up that I needed to address more.
MSU Instructor: 35:46 Okay.
Interviewer: 35:46 So that's actually good. Okay, well I'll let you get back to what you're doing, but I really, really appreciate everything you've given me here because it helps a lot.
MSU Instructor: 35:58 Okay.
Interviewer: 35:58 It gives me so much more than just the little bit that I get in the survey.
MSU Instructor: 36:04 If you need to follow up with me on anything, just let me know.
Interviewer: 36:06 Okay.
MSU Instructor: 36:07 [redacted]
Interviewer: 36:10 [redacted]
MSU Instructor: 36:11 [redacted]
Interviewer: 36:16 [redacted]
MSU Instructor: 36:27 [redacted]
Interviewer: 36:27 [redacted]
MSU Instructor: 36:29 Okay.
Interviewer: 36:30 Okay, well I will let you get to your thing and I'm going to do my stuff. If you want to see anything that comes out of this, I will be glad to share it with you.
MSU Instructor: 36:39 Yeah, I'd love to see your paper when you're done.
Interviewer: 36:41 Okay, I will definitely pass that along.
MSU Instructor: 36:43 And submit it to a conference.
Interviewer: 36:45 Yeah, definitely.
MSU Instructor: 36:47 Mm-hmm (affirmative), all right. I enjoyed talking to you again.
Interviewer: 36:50 Yeah, you too. I hope you have a good semester.
MSU Instructor: 36:53 Thank you, you too.
Interviewer: 36:54 All right, talk to you later. Bye-bye.
MSU Instructor: 36:55 All right, okay. Bye-bye.

Shawnee Community College Instructor

Interviewer: Zachary Garrett
Location: 8364 Shawnee College Road, Ullin, Illinois
Interviewee: SCC Instructor
Location: 8364 Shawnee College Road, Ullin, Illinois
Date: 25 January 2019

Begin Transcription

Interviewer: 00:00 Okay, here we go. That way if one messes up, I have two. Okay. I'm going to go ahead and get started. I'm going to start by asking you to tell me your name, and this is a recorded interview, so I need you to tell me if you consent to being recorded in this interview.

SCC Instructor: 00:28 My name is <SCC Instructor>. I consent to this recording and this interview.

Interviewer: 00:35 Okay. Have you received the interview consent letter that I had sent to you by email?

SCC Instructor: 00:39 Yeah, I have.

Interviewer: 00:40 Have you reviewed it, and understand?

SCC Instructor: 00:41 I reviewed it and understand it, and willing to participate.

Interviewer: 00:45 Okay, good. This interview is basically a followup to the survey that I sent out last semester, and the purpose is to supplement the survey results with more in depth explorations of some of the same issues that you see in the survey. I'm going to cover some issues that have to do with your background as an instructor, your attitudes or perceptions of professional development in you field, the differences in professional culture between high school and college teachers, especially in the field of English and writing, your perceptions of student preparedness, and your beliefs about what would make things better for students, for professional development, for understanding where your students are coming from, and the conditions that they have in the high school. I'm going to try to cover those, I'm going to try to be brief about it, but also get enough information from you to really fill in my survey results.

SCC Instructor: 01:50 Okay.

Interviewer: 01:51 I'm going to ask you to start by, just introduce yourself and tell me about your professional background. Where are you from, why are you here, what are your interests, things like that.

SCC Instructor: 02:03 My educational background is, I have a [redacted] in rhetoric and composition. I guess what has always drawn me to that was the fact that I enjoyed to write, I like writing. I had some luck early on in my writing career getting published, and I enjoy the creative process of that, and I like bringing that to the classroom and seeing the students create their own compositions and things. [redacted] What else?

Interviewer: 03:18 That's basically it. It's just kind of a sense of where you're from and what your interests are. Do you consider that you have a philosophy as a teacher, and how do you express the value of what you do?

SCC Instructor: 03:31 As far as teaching writing, yes, I have a philosophy in which I've tried to meld some different schools of writing philosophy together in mine. I'm a firm believer in process pedagogy, and just from my experience and personality I sort of always sided with the expressivist camp of writing theory, the Peter Elbows and the Donald Murrays and people of those natures. But I also realize that writing is a highly cognitive act, and so as I matured as a writer and as a teacher, I incorporated more of cognitive writing, philosophy, into it, Flowers and Hayes and people like that. So it's an ongoing process for me, it keeps changing, and with technology and things of that nature, I have to adapt and try to keep current with the students.

Interviewer: 04:54 Okay. Then, how would you express what the qualities of college level writing are, as opposed to other levels of writing, especially distinct from what they do in high school?

SCC Instructor: 05:07 At the college level, we stress much more the revision process, and the fleshing out of ideas with evidence and with proof. The biggest challenge that I present my class with is that high school, I call it much more "what-writing", is you're writing to get a particular goal accomplished. But with college writing, you're not only doing the "whats", but you're having to explain the "whys" with it, and so it's a different level of cognitive thought. One of my argumentative writing assignments is a play upon Karl Rogers, to where you have a Rogerian argument. In high school, many times, they're taught more or less of the dogmatic mindsets, where pros and cons, and points to back up pros and cons, but for my college classes I push for a larger arena of thought to

where you not only have the pros and cons, but you need to be able to argue for a compromise between them and explain why that compromise is much more valuable than the pros or cons.
Interviewer: 06:43 Okay. I think that covers that. Partially what I'm doing with that is determining the different perceptions that high school teachers and college instructors have about what it even means to be a college level writer. As far as professional development, we're going to move on to that topic, describe what the opportunities for professional development are at Shawnee Community College.
SCC Instructor: 07:10 Recently we've improved in that area. Previous with state budgets and things of that nature, it was difficult for faculty to go out to different conferences and to go to different workshops and so forth. Recently we've had opportunities. Last year I went to Kansas City for the four C's [Conference on College Composition and Communication], and before then I may have gone to one other conference in a seven year period. That's as far as formal professional development. Informally, as a department, we're constantly working on things like assessment, and we're working on things, different strategies on how to reach students. That's done in house. We have probably at least three different professional development meetings, just our faculty, but we're encouraged, within the last year or so, to go out and seek these opportunities and see if we can participate in them. So far we've been good about being able to do that.
Interviewer: 08:47 That's awesome, that's really cool. So you would say that the institutional support has improved, but would you rate it as really good, or maybe more room for improvement?
SCC Instructor: 09:02 I would rate it more room for improvement, but from where we were, I think most people are happy with the opportunity to go to one here and there.
Interviewer: 09:13 Good. Are there any areas that you think are overlooked as far as professional development is concerned?
SCC Instructor: 09:27 I think technology would be. I think we need a greater emphasis on how to implement technology in the classroom. I don't necessarily mean just delivery systems. Moodle's convenient. It may not be the best, but for obvious reasons we have it here. So much of the multimedia world today, it's ... I would like to see more of that. When I went to Kansas City [location for 2018 Conference on College Composition and Communication] they were talking about how they were introducing these new movie types of software that you could bring into the class, and you could make your lecture almost theatrical in a sense. Some may argue that it's bells and whistles, and it's just more reactionary and it inhibits learning, but you see more and more students that learn that way, and I think we need to have a greater challenge to try to teach the way that they're learning, not just the way that we were taught and learn.
Interviewer: 10:53 Good. So transition also, then, to the differences in professional culture between high schools and colleges, particularly the English classroom. Explain briefly your understanding of the high school English classroom, especially when it comes to writing and reading assignments, what perceive are the differences from your experiences.
SCC Instructor: 11:18 Traditionally, growing up, it was high school classrooms were much more modes-oriented in their writing. Whereas today, with aspects such as dual credit and things like that, when there seems to be more conjunction with the college, I think that the high school classroom has changed to where it's become more process-oriented as far as pedagogy. Still traditional boundaries exist in high school. Sophomore light paper, senior research paper, things of those natures, still exist. I guess my perception is, there's so much that the teacher has to cover that there may not be enough time to really teach revision the way that it should, or again, I'm unfamiliar, I don't get a lot of reaction from students when I talk about creative writing, how prevalent that is in high school any more and things like that.
Interviewer: 12:57 Okay. That's really helpful. So also exploring areas of workplace issues, so what the teaching conditions are like, different, that you would experience as opposed to a high school teacher.
SCC Instructor: 13:15 The politics, obviously, are ... Every place has politics, but here the politics are difficult to negotiate, to say the least. It may be due to my length of being here, and the positions that I am on in committees, but I spend more time outside of the classroom in committees and in administrative meetings and things of that nature than I do in the classroom. Sometimes you feel like you're being paid to do a job that you don't spend that much time at because you're having to do so much more administrative work, paperwork and meeting HLC requirements, and making sure that ICCB is this. You have that everywhere, so I guess it's just ramped up a few degrees here.
Interviewer: 14:30 So the high school teacher would have less of those administrative responsibilities and pressures?
SCC Instructor: 14:38 I don't know if it'd be less. You may have the same amount. I just think the stakes are greater here, with what we have to go through, and the type of pressure that's put from higher up. I don't want to make it sound like, again, that this is a horrible cross to bear, because it's not. To me the classroom's the best job of all.
SCC Instructor: 15:20 I was trying to think of what else would ... Maybe another would be intellectual freedom. Recently, with various cases that are out in the media now, you have to be wary on what you say and

how you say it, and of course whom you say it to. But I think the college atmosphere, still we have more freedom than what you would in the high school, and more latitude.
Interviewer: 16:13 Good. I think that covers a lot of it. They're just trying to be comprehensive there. What do you know about the standards and objectives the high school teachers have to meet? Just how familiar are you with them?
SCC Instructor: 16:29 Not very. I know that there's a Common Core that has to be met, and I know that there's a movement away from that, but as far as the single objectives that they have to meet in their classrooms in order to fulfill their requirements, I haven't ever sat down and talked with them about that.
Interviewer: 17:03 Okay. How familiar are you with the pedagogical strategies that they use in the classroom, how they might differ from what you do?
SCC Instructor: 17:17 As far as writing, I would hope they wouldn't differ very much at all. But obviously, teaching secondary education, there has to be ways in which ... There's only certain things that they can use. But as far as the actual pedagogy itself, I would think, and I've had the fortunate ability to be with several high school teachers and know them through summer writing workshops and of that nature, and they seem to assure that process pedagogy, ample time for revision is what we teach and what we want. That's what I'm told, so that's what I believe.
Interviewer: 18:16 What I've heard is, they value those things, but they don't necessarily have the time to implement them in the way that they want to. But when you talk about certain things that they can use, are you talking about readings or material that are maybe more controversial?
SCC Instructor: 18:31 Both. And technology, and access to maybe people from outside that they could bring in, that they could use to reinforce a point or a thing like that.
Interviewer: 18:48 Good. Moving to student preparedness, let's think about, in the classrooms that you teach, think about your high achieving students and your low achieving students, and describe their preparedness for college level writing whenever they start your courses. They're coming from high school, they're coming into your composition classes; how do you perceive their preparedness for college level writing? Then, compare and contrast the high achieving and low achieving students in that respect.
SCC Instructor: 19:25 I see preparedness in two different ways. One is being a college student, and one is being a writer. More and more, I get students in the classroom that, first of all, are not mature enough to understand what it means to be a college student. So basic rules of etiquette and respect, we have to go over things of that nature. For example, a cellphone policy and things like that, where as traditionally you wouldn't ... My philosophy has always been, and it still is, I treat you like an adult until you give me a reason not to.
SCC Instructor: 20:16 With cellphones and other type of, whether they're headphones or whatever the case is, you have more of those issues today than I think that you used to have. And I think it depends upon ... I'm not blaming the students. It's society, and you see more people walking around with headphones going to check their mail than you used to. But in the classroom, just like on the job, there has to be a time in which those things get set aside, unless they're going to be used for academic purposes, which, I'm fine making the argument that you can use those things in a academic environment. But the whole maturity is the place where I would start to where you can really see the difference between students that know why they're here and what they want to do, and those that don't.
SCC Instructor: 21:25 As far as writing goes, I'm seeing more in our comp one class that need basic computer skills, basic typing. Back when I was in high school you took a keyboarding class. I don't know if they still require those in high school now or not.
Interviewer: 21:53 In the early 2000s they did, but now I'm starting to get far enough away from it that I don't know what they do any more.
SCC Instructor: 22:04 It's difficult to teach writing when we're having to teach the basic word processing and the basic typing skills. Especially in developmental classes, that's a great issue. High-end writers are prepared in the fact that they know the basic concepts of focus, organization, development, and again, these are things that I stress with all the writers, regardless of level. They're the main things that I grade their writing upon. Whereas the ones that are unprepared need to have more tutorial help in those areas, your more prepared student seems like they need more ... You spend more time with them talking about things like style and sources and correctness and things of that nature. And so much of our technology now gears toward helping them fix their style and correctness, and it's interesting to see exactly how far you're able to push them to revise and things like that, since all the correctness, they can handle themselves for the most part.
Interviewer: 23:32 Okay. Then thinking about preparedness, do you feel that preparedness is a major problem, or something that we're in a place that we can work with?
SCC Instructor: 23:51 That's a loaded question. Because if I say that it's in a place that we can work with, I'm saying that we can adapt and help the students, which we should. But if I say that there needs to be more of it then it's like I'm blaming the high schools for not doing their job. Which, some of them should be blamed for not doing their job. As a developmental person that runs a developmental English bridge program, I look at their

reading scores and their writing scores, and I can see that some of the people that we're getting at the college level here can't read. It's like, how can they graduate high school if they can't read? It's like, those type of people I do hold the school responsible for. But a nontraditional student that comes back 25 years, or a soldier that's coming back from war, that hadn't had a high school class in seven or eight years, yeah, there's going to be a need to help them out. Those type of things, I think you can work with. A lot of it goes back to maturity. Are they willing to invest what it's going to take to get them up to where we want them to be? It's harder to motivate them to get to that degree than what it used to be, I think.

Interviewer: 25:24 So basically what I'm hearing is, you don't want to assign blame for the students' lack of maturity on their high school teachers, because those might be a character issue or something.

SCC Instructor: 25:36 Correct. I think there's a lot of people that could be assigned to.

Interviewer: 25:44 That makes sense. I was asking a question there that was perhaps a little bit controversial or critical of someone else just to see what you would say about it, so kind of intentional there. That's a good answer, that's all very helpful. Of the things that you've said that maybe you don't fully understand about the professional culture of high school, you've talked about not understanding objectives or standards and things like that, or knowing that there are differences between the demands that are placed on you, or the academic freedom. What would help you understand those things better, especially in the context of a professional development effort? What would help you?

SCC Instructor: 26:27 I think it'd be a great service for the college, and me, and the area high school and their teachers, if there was a forum in which we could get together and maybe ... I don't want to say alone curriculum, because I'm not sure that I really agree with that, because it makes it sound like writing's a linear process to me, and you can't do that. But for me to teach an argumentative paper, I would like to see what a high school teacher would think I would be looking at. And for them when I say I don't know their objectives and things like that, I'm assuming that clear, concise, competent composition is what their ultimate goal is. So as far as how they obtain that objective, those are the things that I don't know. I don't know if they sit and do grammar exercises, I would hope to God they wouldn't, but I don't know how they get to that definition of that clear, concise composition that they have.

SCC Instructor: 27:54 But anything like that, like I've made mention, when I taught at <state university>, we had a summer workshop, like a weeklong workshop, to where different educators from colleges and high schools, we got together and we took days where we created something, we presented something, and it all got published into one particular thing, which I don't have with me on the shelf, but it was an eye-opening account of exactly, this is what they're doing in the high school, this is what I think I can take from that idea, and it's a good way to share. Above all else, on the selfish end of it, it's a great recruitment tool for the college.

Interviewer: 28:51 Mm-hmm (affirmative). Interesting. Then, do you have any other comments or clarifications about anything that you've mentioned?

SCC Instructor: 29:11 Not that I can think of. I get asked a lot from other faculty about, if a student is taking a history test and they have an essay question, how come they can't give me an essay answer? It's like, not everyone is on the same page as, well how do you answer an essay question? So they'll ask me and I'll say, my essay answers that I expect on my literature tests have an introduction, they have a body, and they have a conclusion. They don't necessarily have five paragraphs, but they have to have those three main ideas, and again, it has to communicate the answer to the prompt. It's like, if there was a guide that high school could provide their students ... The way I look at it is tools in a toolbox. If they can give them the tools that they could use in these particular situations, I think it would make them more successful when they get to those other classes. Because they may take those classes before they ever get to me.

SCC Instructor: 30:50 Then, I'm looking at the history teacher for an example, I don't know if this happens with him, but he gives an essay question and he gets a paragraph answer. It's like, that's not what he's expecting. He's expecting a more detailed, thoughtful response. Maybe giving them that particular idea that, well when you encounter this type of obstacle at the next level, this is probably a better opportunity to give that type of response, the multi-paragraph response, things like that.

SCC Instructor: 31:29 I don't know if that made sense.

Interviewer: 31:35 No, there's just some observations of students, what they expect that they're doing, or maybe how the interpret terms like "essay," that don't seem to align with one another, depending on what it is that we're doing. That makes sense, and that helps. I think that basically covers it as far as this interview is concerned, so I'm going to say thanks, and I'm going to go ahead and shut the recording off now.

Murray State University Area High School Teacher

Interviewer: Zachary Garrett
Location: 104 South 4th Street, Vienna, Illinois
Interviewee: MSU Area Teacher
Location: MSU Area High School, Kentucky
Date: 18 February 2019

Begin Transcription

MSU Area Teacher: 00:07 Hello?
Interviewer: 00:10 Hello. Is this <MSU Area Teacher>?
MSU Area Teacher: 00:13 This is she.
Interviewer: 00:14 Yeah. This is Zach Garrett. I'm the student at Murray State University.
MSU Area Teacher: 00:18 Yes. How are you?
Interviewer: 00:19 Very good. How are you?
MSU Area Teacher: 00:23 I'm doing well thank you.
Interviewer: 00:24 Good. I hope I caught you at a good time here. We got all that worked out with the phone number and everything. I'll go ahead and just get started because I think you probably got the gist of it from some of the stuff I passed along before, right?
MSU Area Teacher: 00:37 Right.
Interviewer: 00:38 Okay. Basically, I had sent you the copy of the interview consent letter. First I need you to tell me your name and the school you're affiliated with.
MSU Area Teacher: 00:49 Okay. My name is <MSU Area Teacher> and I'm a dual credit teacher at <MSU Area> High School.
Interviewer: 00:57 Okay. Do you consent to have this interview recorded?
MSU Area Teacher: 01:01 I do.
Interviewer: 01:03 Have you received and reviewed the consent letter that I emailed you?
MSU Area Teacher: 01:08 I did.
Interviewer: 01:09 All right, good. Thank you very much.
MSU Area Teacher: 01:11 You're welcome.
Interviewer: 01:12 Okay. Basically, the idea behind this interview ... you may remember the survey from last semester that I'd sent out. It covered several different areas of inquiry. The purpose of the interviews here is to supplement the survey results with something that's a little bit more in depth. So survey results are surface level. Interview results can be a little more in depth and can supplement some of those answers that I had received from all of the teachers in the region.
MSU Area Teacher: 01:39 Okay.
Interviewer: 01:39 So, that's the purpose of this particular interview. I'm going to cover those areas of inquiry that were covered in the survey like attitudes toward professional development, differences between high school and college and your understanding of those things, your perception of student preparedness and things like that.
MSU Area Teacher: 01:55 Okay.
Interviewer: 01:56 I will go ahead and get started, if that's okay with you.
MSU Area Teacher: 01:59 Sure.
Interviewer: 02:00 All right. Our first area to cover is background and beliefs. Just very briefly, introduce yourself and describe your professional background.
MSU Area Teacher: 02:10 Well like I said, my name is <MSU Area Teacher>. I've been teaching since [redacted] almost [redacted] years, not quite [redacted] years teaching experience. My [redacted] and I've taught in seven states and two different countries. I have a Master's degree and National Board Certification and I also have my Gifted certification and 280 hours in ESOL education. That's the long and the short of that.
Interviewer: 02:43 Mm-hmm (affirmative). Good. Do you consider yourself to have just a very brief teaching philosophy? If so, what would that be? How do you express the value of your work?
MSU Area Teacher: 02:55 Yeah. I think that every student can learn. It's just a matter of finding what the trick is for that particular student. You have to find the way to get them to be intrinsically motivated. Otherwise, the old adage you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make them drink.
Interviewer: 03:14 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
MSU Area Teacher: 03:14 I believe that everybody can learn. I feel like it's a two-way street. Both of us have to work, but I have to find what's going to make that kid tick, the ones who are reluctant. That's how I look at it.

Interviewer: 03:26 Good. Okay, thank you. Given that, in the same area what do you think are the qualities of college level writing in your opinion?
MSU Area Teacher: 03:39 Since I teach both AP [Advanced Placement] Lang and college dual credit English, first of all it needs to make sense. What they write needs to make sense. But, the biggest obstacle that I have as a dual credit instructor teaching on a high school campus is to get them to understand they can't just copy and paste from the internet. They have to cite sources and these ideas need to be more polished, more sophisticated, clearly expressed with higher level vocabulary, which most of them don't have because they are reluctant readers.
Interviewer: 04:14 Okay. The next area of inquiry here is going to be your professional development. Describe the opportunities that you have for professional development at <MSU Area> High School.
MSU Area Teacher: 04:28 Okay. At the high school, we have several things that they do throughout the year. Right now I'm involved in becoming a Google-certified teacher, but there is always things before school, after school, before school begins and right before school ends as far as PDL [professional development/professional learning?] and other different kinds of ... writing things that we do. There are so many of them and I can't even ... they have all these cute little names and I can't remember all of them.
MSU Area Teacher: 04:56 Then of course you can always go back to school at Murray State, National Board Certifications. There are so many different ways to get PD [professional development]. I like the fact that you can choose the online things and the classes that we choose [redacted]
Interviewer: 05:22 [redacted]
MSU Area Teacher: 05:33 [redacted]
Interviewer: 05:38 [redacted]
MSU Area Teacher: 05:40 [redacted]
Interviewer: 05:42 [redacted]
MSU Area Teacher: 05:44 [redacted]
Interviewer: 05:46 Okay. Good. Do you think there are any areas that are overlooked for professional development?
MSU Area Teacher: 05:54 The biggest area that's overlooked for every level of teacher is classroom management. There's never anything like that and there's no ... at least when I was in education classes, they didn't teach you how to manage a class. It was just sink or swim kid, here you go. They do have, I think Murray State does an excellent job of having more than one student teacher experience. So they've got several now where they're observing their teaching lessons. Then they have a full semester of teaching before they're actually just thrown to the wolves. I think that's an area because even some older people don't know how to manage their classes very well. Frankly it's annoying.
Interviewer: 06:37 Right. Interesting. That's an area of inquiry that I haven't heard anybody mention yet, so that's very good for me.
MSU Area Teacher: 06:44 Okay.
Interviewer: 06:45 Yeah, good.
MSU Area Teacher: 06:46 Bye guys. Hang on a second if you don't mind, Interviewer.
Interviewer: 06:50 No problem.
MSU Area Teacher: 06:51 [others enter room in background] Did you have a question? Yeah, you can leave your stuff in here. It's fine. No, you're fine. No worries. Okay, sorry about that. [others leave room]
Interviewer: 07:03 That's fine. Okay. The next area is going to be the differences between high school and college, particularly as it pertains to English classrooms. Explain your understanding of the college English composition classroom, especially when it comes to writing and reading assignments. I know that you're going to be a little more familiar because you're dual credit, but from your perspective as a high school teacher, explain your understanding of college English composition.
MSU Area Teacher: 07:30 Okay. For the most part, I am following West Kentucky's [West Kentucky Community and Technical College] dual credit, or just 101 and 102 curriculum. There's an average of five papers, well a minimum of five papers. You can teach more than that if you want to, but we have five that are required. In 101, they are different process papers. Narration, description, process analysis, compare and contrast, that kind of thing. I do teach my AP kids those different modes of writing because many times, more than one mode are required in a particular assignment.
MSU Area Teacher: 08:05 For example, define the Baroque Period then compare and contrast that with the Enlightenment or whatever it might be. It's just different modes of writing. We also read several student examples of these different types of essays as well as professional texts of these different essays analyzing and breaking it down, deconstructing those writing patterns and then coming up with our own. I have them choose their own topics, which I think is huge because in high school, a lot of time they just sit around and wait for

someone else to say this is what you're going to write about and this is how long it has to be. That's my pet peeve question. How many paragraphs?
MSU Area Teacher: 08:44 No, just beginning, a middle and an end. Create an amazing, fluid, concise essay for me. I think that's the main difference because high school kids, they carry over from elementary and middle school what they're told, five paragraphs and a Grand Canyon in between paragraphs, that huge space that they put in there, which annoys the ever living you know what out of me. Then of course MLA [Modern Language Association style]. Hardly any of them are familiar with MLA guidelines, which it's like pulling teeth to get that across to them, especially when it comes to documenting sources because they'll create a works cited page, but there won't be on single in-text citation.
MSU Area Teacher: 09:26 I tell them basically you just plagiarized and this is a failing paper in college.
Interviewer: 09:30 Yes it is.
MSU Area Teacher: 09:34 Exactly. I tell them this is not going to float. That's a really huge stepping stone to get them used to that type of writing. I feel like my job is to break them into that and also, deadlines are deadlines. Nobody cares how cute you are or who your daddy is or what kind of car you drive. The deadline is the deadline. If you miss it, too bad for you.
Interviewer: 09:56 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
MSU Area Teacher: 09:59 That's another issue. I guess what I'm saying is maturity. It's a big deal, the maturity level.
Interviewer: 10:05 Yeah. It sounds like to me what I'm hearing is kind of the source of your understanding of what they do in college is from you having to teach it. Think back to ... when did you start teaching dual credit classes?
MSU Area Teacher: 10:24 Let's see. About [redacted] years ago.
Interviewer: 10:29 Okay. Thinking back to before you started doing that, what was basically the source of your understanding of what happens in college English composition?
MSU Area Teacher: 10:38 Well, I've always taught 101 and 102 as an evening instructor because I came in doing that, because my husband moved around so much that mostly I taught at universities and community colleges because I could always find work. They were always needing people to teach 101, 102 and humanities courses.
Interviewer: 11:00 Yeah.
MSU Area Teacher: 11:00 I've always had that understanding that the reading needs to be closer. The writing needs to be more clear and it's not so much how long it needs to be, but how in depth is it and how well have you explained it and how relevant are your examples. The content is more elevated, I guess is what I'm saying.
Interviewer: 11:21 Okay, okay. Good. When you are, I don't know, do you teach any courses at the high school that are not dual credit?
MSU Area Teacher: 11:33 Well I have the AP course.
Interviewer: 11:35 Okay, you have the AP course. So you use some of the same strategies that you would use in the composition credit course for the AP course.
MSU Area Teacher: 11:43 Yes.
Interviewer: 11:44 Okay. Okay. Yeah.
MSU Area Teacher: 11:47 Well, the reason for that is because that AP course, provided they pass the AP exam at the end of the semester, that's the class that they get credit for is 101, depending on how high they score on their exam. If they score a three, they're going to get credit in most places for 101. Four or five on that exam, which is the highest score, is usually going to get them both 101 and 102, so they can clip out of those English courses in college.
Interviewer: 12:16 Right. Okay. Good.
MSU Area Teacher: 12:21 It's very similar.
Interviewer: 12:22 Okay, okay. Yeah. The things you would want to do would be similar because you're preparing them for the same thing. Okay. The next section I have here is about student preparedness. I would like you to describe your high achieving students, particularly as far as their preparedness for college level writing. Also describe your low achieving students, particularly their preparedness for college level writing and kind of contrast them. Just talk about your experiences with your students and their preparedness in general.
MSU Area Teacher: 12:56 Oh goodness. The ones who are prepared, and it's very difficult. We could write a book on this to tell you the truth. But the ones who are very prepared, my 102 kids are very prepared. Of course, they went through 101 last year and they've always had honors classes. A lot of these kids have only made A's in their lives. They're still struggling with MLA structures and that sort of thing, but they spend a lot of time preparing and they read and they come in with everything done and they bring their own computers and they have ideas and questions and they read outside of class. The higher level students, that's what they're doing. They're already there.

MSU Area Teacher: 13:39 Those are the kind of kids when they are in my AP class, they come in as fives and I just try not to screw them up because they're already there. You know what I mean? You just completely ... you keep them up there and keep challenging them and keep them at that level. But the lower level kids, and I'll tell you this too. The higher level achieving kids have generally two-parent homes. They have parents who are supportive. They have parents who are not forcing them to work in after-school jobs or they're not involved in things like drugs and alcohol and they're not worried about if they're going eat, when they're going to eat and if their house is going to be warm in the winter time and if they're going to have clothes to wear.
MSU Area Teacher: 14:22 So that's a huge difference. A lot of my lower achieving kids, they do have those issues. I've got a lot of kids who have one or more parents or guardians in jail, in and out of jail. Some of them, they're poverty level. We have 75% free and reduced lunch rate over here [46.0% of students receive free or reduced lunch at <MSU Area> High School, according to the Kentucky Department of Education], so there's an awful lot of poverty in our county. An awful lot of unmarried pregnancies, out-of-wedlock pregnancies, teenage pregnancies and drug issues. Oh my goodness. When I was in school, it was like, “don't chew gum, man”.
Interviewer: 15:10 Exactly.
MSU Area Teacher: 15:10 Now it's like, “don't have sex in the bathroom” and “stay away from the drugs” and “oh my gosh, why are you vaping?”
Interviewer: 15:17 Right.
MSU Area Teacher: 15:19 “What's in your water bottle, buddy? Is that Vodka?” It's crazy, and there's a cycle of abuse of different substances. And, of course, in those homes, there's not going to be as much support for education. There's not going to be a lot of hope for how am I going to pay for this because scholarships are ... they don't even think that they can qualify or get any kind of money for scholarships. Of course their KEES [Kentucky Education Excellence Scholarship] money is non-existent because they haven't made the A's and the B's and the higher level ACT scores that they need to make.
Interviewer: 15:55 So there are a lot of confounding factors here is kind of what you're saying for the low achieving students. They don't necessarily have to do with writing or teaching or the students themselves.
MSU Area Teacher: 16:06 Right. Well, the lower achieving kids have so many more things going on in their lives and a lot of times, they ... I've had one. I'm thinking of one individual, one child in particular who, his mother was ... and he was very bright. Super bright kid, but his mother was a heroin addict. I was thinking meth, but that wasn't right. So they didn't have any running water in their house and he did not ... he was very bright and could do it and wrote very well. He was an excellent thinker, but was so scatter brained because he was worried about his seven year old brother and didn't want anybody to know about their situation because he didn't want that boy taken away from him.
MSU Area Teacher: 16:48 They were bathing in the river behind their house, even in the dead of winter, freezing cold. This is the kind of thing that's going on in families that don't have that support system and don't have two parents who graduated from at least high school, if not some college who are supporting these kids to get a higher education and have more earning potential for their future. So they're not reading.
MSU Area Teacher: 17:12 And when you don't read, you don't write as well. When you're not writing and you're not taking school seriously, you're just not going to hone those skills.
Interviewer: 17:21 Right, right. Okay, good. That's very helpful because that is one of the distinctions I suppose between high school and college, not that college instructors don't have to deal with those issues, but that high school teachers have to deal with those things.
MSU Area Teacher: 17:40 Yes.
Interviewer: 17:40 Yeah. Kids are in high school in many ways involuntarily. So you get everybody. Anyway.
MSU Area Teacher: 17:50 Yeah on the college level, is a professor got a phone call from a parent, they'd probably laugh them off the phone. Like what are you doing calling me?
Interviewer: 17:56 I would say I'm not allowed to talk to you, sorry.
MSU Area Teacher: 17:59 Yeah, exactly. It's FERPA [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act]. Boom.
Interviewer: 18:01 Exactly.
MSU Area Teacher: 18:03 Yeah.
Interviewer: 18:03 My final thing here is you seem very aware of conditions in college English Comp. Given that, what kinds of activities would help one of your colleagues who is not that familiar with what happens in college English Composition? What kind of activities would help increase their awareness?
MSU Area Teacher: 18:26 Hmm. Well I tell you, my class is a lot different than other people's classes, primarily because I put the majority of the learning and the responsibility for learning on those kids. I introduce something. I will explain something, but I don't lecture a lot, which I think in some cases is not like college, because a lot of college classes they do just lecture and you move on. But in English composition classes, there's a lot more collaboration going on because it is about the writing and the process and the reading carefully and the analysis and the clear structure of construction of writing and putting it together.

MSU Area Teacher: 19:09 So I show them different examples and then I have them think by themselves and then pair them off and then put them together in quads. We do a lot of peer editing. I know there's peer editing going on in these hallways, but I don't know about a lot of high school teachers who are comfortable giving up the control. Does that make sense?
Interviewer: 19:31 Right. Yes.
MSU Area Teacher: 19:33 I do that because I figure kids want to learn. I think they do want to learn and when you're giving them real world situations where they're applying these things, then it makes the light bulb go on a lot sooner and maybe even brighter.
Interviewer: 19:52 Yeah.
MSU Area Teacher: 19:52 Perhaps they'll catch that bug. I know a lot of kids, I teach extra novels than what I have to. My 102 class, West Kentucky does not require a novel, but we always do one, at least one if not two. Right now we're reading Frankenstein, which is one of my favorites. In the 101 classes, we always read the one book read. I don't know if you're familiar with that on that campus. But there's one book that's usually by a contemporary local author that every 101 student reads and we have discussions and online discussions and in the Spring there's always an opportunity to meet the author and have a book signing and question and answer thing. It's really cool.
Interviewer: 20:32 Really? Cool.
MSU Area Teacher: 20:33 Yeah. We always do that early. This year it's March 13, so the kids ... I tell them, I say, "You know. You all are fortunate because not very many people get to meet the author of the books that they're reading." So we get a picture with the author and they can sign their books. Then we all go out to lunch afterwards and we talk about the experience. More often than not, they're excited about it and they enjoy it and they think it's a really neat thing. Of course I have the pictures of my classes with the authors every year in my room. So they're all like “oh my gosh. We get to make our picture this year”.
MSU Area Teacher: 21:09 Anything that gets them excited about actually learning and taking responsibility for their learning.
Interviewer: 21:16 That's really neat. [redacted]
MSU Area Teacher: 21:27 [redacted]
Interviewer: 21:30 [redacted]
MSU Area Teacher: 21:36 [redacted]
Interviewer: 21:38 That's basically what I'm looking for. Just some of that supplemental information. That's pretty much all I need. I will have your gift card and I will email you a notice about that.
MSU Area Teacher: 21:49 Okay. I had forgotten all about that.
Interviewer: 21:52 No, that's good. You are investing your time and it's good to have some kind of compensation for that.
MSU Area Teacher: 22:00 Well I thank you.
Interviewer: 22:02 Aside from that, I really appreciate you giving your time to me on this because it really helps supplement my information. You can only get so much out of a survey. And hearing those real life stories about what actually happens in a real life high school is pretty meaningful to what I'm trying to do. Good. I hope you have a good [redacted]
MSU Area Teacher: 22:27 Thank you, Zach. I appreciate it. Back to grading papers.
Interviewer: 22:30 Yep. Back to it. Thank you very much.
MSU Area Teacher: 22:33 Thank you so much. Have a good day. Bye bye.

Shawnee Community College Area High School Teacher

Interviewer: Zachary Garrett
Location: 104 South 4th Street, Vienna, Illinois
Interviewee: SCC Area Teacher
Location: SCC Area High School, Illinois
Date: 11 January 2019

Begin Transcription

SCC Area Teacher: 00:06 Hello.
Interviewer: 00:07 Hello. <SCC Area Teacher>?
SCC Area Teacher: 00:08 Yes.
Interviewer: 00:10 Hey. This is Zach.
SCC Area Teacher: 00:12 Hey Zach.
Interviewer: 00:12 Hey. How are you?
SCC Area Teacher: 00:15 I'm good. How are you?
Interviewer: 00:16 I'm pretty good. Do you need to get everything ready for the semester?
SCC Area Teacher: 00:20 Yeah, just working on all kinds of curriculum and all kinds of stuff.
Interviewer: 00:26 [redacted]
SCC Area Teacher: 00:45 [redacted]
Interviewer: 00:45 [redacted]
SCC Area Teacher: 00:45 [redacted]
Interviewer: 00:46 [redacted]
SCC Area Teacher: 00:46 [redacted]
Interviewer: 00:49 Okay, so it's going to go is I'm going ... ask you about the ... First, I'm going to get consent to record. If you look at the consent letter, it has all the stuff in it about how anything that's personally identifiable that ends up in any writeup from this is going to be taken out, so no one will be able to tell who you are and things like that.
SCC Area Teacher: 01:08 Okay.
Interviewer: 01:08 I don't know if you saw your email. I'd sent you what's supposed ...
SCC Area Teacher: 01:11 I did.
Interviewer: 01:12 ... [crosstalk] document. Okay, so I'll start by asking for permission to record, and I'll have that on the recording, and then I'll ask you about the consent letter and things like that. I will go ahead and get started right about now, and I'll be writing sometimes and noting at times that you may say certain things, so [inaudible 00:01:32].
SCC Area Teacher: 01:31 Okay.
Interviewer: 01:34 Can you please tell me your name and what school you're affiliated with?
SCC Area Teacher: 01:40 I am <SCC Area Teacher>, and I teach at <SCC Area> High School.
Interviewer: 01:44 Okay. This interview will be recorded. Do you consent to have this interview recorded?
SCC Area Teacher: 01:50 I do.
Interviewer: 01:52 Okay, and have you received and do you understand the consent letter that was emailed to you?
SCC Area Teacher: 01:59 I do, and I did receive it.
Interviewer: 02:00 Okay. Good. The purpose of this interview is actually a follow-up on the survey that I had sent out before, so a lot of the content of the interview is going to follow the same areas of interest as that survey, because the purpose of the interviews in this project is to supplement the limitations of the data that comes from the survey. Survey data is somewhat limited because people do it in five minutes, and you don't get a lot of in-depth information, so I'm conducting surveys in order to fill out the results a little bit.
Interviewer: 02:37 So it's going to be the same type of questions, the same subject areas, just you're free to talk more about what you think in your own personal experience and things like that, so that's basically what's going on here. I'm going to start with asking about your background and beliefs about teaching, opportunities for professional development, where you work, how you perceive the differences between teaching English in high school and college, student preparedness and just a general discussion of what would help.
Interviewer: 03:10 Does that sound like a good plan?
SCC Area Teacher: 03:12 Yes, that is fine.

Interviewer: 03:14 All right, so, first, I just want you to introduce yourself very briefly and describe what your professional background is.
SCC Area Teacher: 03:21 Okay. I have had an interest in teaching actually from a very young age. Even in elementary school, I felt drawn to education and I didn't really focus on English and in that area until high school. I had decided in just different subject areas and, that being my strong suit and really having a passion for that, that I wanted to go into the high school setting or some kind of secondary education with English, and so, right out of high school, then I went into college, and I am one of those, I guess, rare people that I never changed my college major, it was always English education. Then graduated in May, and I started a few months after, in August, at <SCC Area> High School, [redacted]
SCC Area Teacher: 04:25 This is my [redacted] year as an educator and, I don't know, I feel like this is where I need to be. This is my calling. I need to be working with students and things, so I feel pretty passionate, I guess, about their education and trying to do what is best for them and what they need and their goals and things like that.
Interviewer: 04:55 Okay. Good, and so, given that, that follows into the additional question here. Do you consider that you have a teaching philosophy and, if so, what is that?
SCC Area Teacher: 05:06 Yeah, so I look at education ... It's a little odd, just even in the 10 years that I have taught and had my own classrooms, the needs of the students is what I tend to gravitate towards and what I feel like should be the philosophy there because I have ... I first started 10 years ago, and then it was ACT, and that as pushed so heavily within the state of Illinois, and then now it's SAT, and those things are being pushed, but it's just I've seen different evaluation tools and all these things happen where I just feel like what it all boils down to at least as the job of an educator is to try to meet the needs of the students, and they have been changing and, some of the routes that they want to take and their plan for after high school. I just want to try to meet those needs, and I feel like your philosophy in education, I think that that's what it's most important than to try to meet state requirements I guess.
Interviewer: 06:19 Yeah. Okay. No, that's very good. I'm going to move to the section on professional development, so, basically ... and some of this is me familiarizing myself because I've worked in post-secondary education, and so that's one of the things that I'm actually exploring here, is little differences that someone like me might not understand, so can you describe basically what the opportunities are for professional development at <SCC Area> High School in particular?
SCC Area Teacher: 06:45 Yes. A lot of our professional development is not very specialized. We are a unit district, and so that includes the high school and the junior high and then all of the elementary school, so, a lot of the professional development, yes, it's education-related, but at the same time it's not content specific, so it may be things about classroom management or it may be about different things just education in general. They provide those kinds of things and, of course, things that are mandated by the state are our traditional professional development opportunities.
SCC Area Teacher: 07:20 We can go in search of other opportunities and fill out a request to go to those kinds of things, but as far as the money that they have and more of a local opportunity that wouldn't cost a lot of money to go to, there really aren't many content specific professional development opportunities especially in English.
Interviewer: 07:50 Okay. That's actually a really interesting thing to learn there because that's ... One of the things that this project would turn into would be a professional development program that would be content specific, so that's actually relevant.
SCC Area Teacher: 08:03 Right, and it really is needed big time, I know at least for my high school, and I know that there are some limitations in administration pushing for certain testing things and requirements from the state, but that's something that we bring up all the time is that we feel that there are things that we're lacking, that we need to push for to make students college ready that maybe aren't a part of the state standards and things like that for high schools. I would love to see some opportunities there.
Interviewer: 08:46 Okay. Awesome. Moving more into, I guess, the main thrust of my project, talking about the differences between teaching English in high school and college, so explain to me your understanding from your perspective as a high school English teacher of the college English composition classroom especially when it comes to writing and reading. Just explain your understanding, how you perceive it.
SCC Area Teacher: 09:12 Okay. I view it as the stepping stone I think for other classes, not only just in English, but also any other college class that you would take, that I feel like a lot of the focus is more about finding those claims and finding those arguments and things and finding proper ways to support it, proper ways to go and research it, and being able to put it all together in one cohesive paper or project or something, but to really focus on the writer being able to communicate well.
Interviewer: 09:49 Okay. Good. What is the source of that understanding of the college English composition classroom that you have?
SCC Area Teacher: 09:59 That comes from when I was in school and taking those classes myself and just knowing ... I guess, knowing the process of how those English composition classes are for every major and every student that has to take them and not just all of the specialized literature classes and things like that.

Interviewer: 10:23 Okay, so, and then thinking about what you do know about that and your own teaching strategies and expectations as a teacher, do you feel that your teaching strategies and expectations as a teacher differ from what students will experience in a first year composition class and, if so, how?
SCC Area Teacher: 10:45 I think yes and no both, if that is possible.
Interviewer: 10:55 Yep.
SCC Area Teacher: 10:55 Yes, I think that my strategies and [inaudible 00:11:01] with some writings and readings that we do. It's not all fiction it's not all things that are just going to apply to literature and things and we work on writings and being able to communicate things, but then I also feel like, no, because of some of the limitations with not only Common Core standards and things but also things that are mandated to us by the state.
SCC Area Teacher: 11:33 Where I teach they are very focused on test scores. One of the main writings and things that they push is going to be that essay that they encounter on the SAT test and the way that is structured where you have an article that has been published and it is kind of their job as the student doing the assignment they have to pick out different features and things of how they are putting their argument together and if it's effective or not.
SCC Area Teacher: 12:07 I think some of that can be applied but I just feel like in a high school setting and certain things that we are expected to accomplish, I think it limits us on what we can actually do or push in that direction. I also have juniors and seniors, that's the age group that I have so I feel like that for me I can say some of my things are going to help them in what they have to do and what they're encountering in a beginning composition class. Some teachers maybe that have the lower age group you know freshman and sophomore students that maybe some of their stuff even here, maybe they're not aligned.
Interviewer: 13:00 Yeah, okay. Some of that is what I have found so far from other sources is basically that one of the biggest differences between high school and college is what you guys have mandated to you. As a college instructor I don't really have anyone breathing down my neck about anything.
SCC Area Teacher: 13:21 Yes.
Interviewer: 13:22 That can be good and that can also be bad if I'm not a very good teacher.
SCC Area Teacher: 13:29 Right.
Interviewer: 13:29 So that's what I've discovered so far too. The next section that I'm gonna talk about here is student preparedness. The first question is gonna be about how you perceive your high achieving students and the second question is gonna be about your low achieving students and it's however you define those terms.
Interviewer: 13:44 So, I'll go ahead and start with, describer your high achieving students particularly as regard to the strength of their writing ability, and preparedness for college level writing and then we're gonna contrast with the low achieving students.
SCC Area Teacher: 14:01 Okay, so for the high achieving students they are, I'll go ahead and say this I guess to start it off, but I feel like one of the biggest differences even between the two groups is motivation just because some of the high achieving students here at <SCC area> high school we are the AP route and not dual credit and so some of the AP writings and things the seniors that I have are AP seniors but they are AP literature seniors and so far as their writing, their writing shows strength but solely based in fiction and poetry and things like that.
SCC Area Teacher: 14:48 I've noticed that even when I do other works with them, even though it's not very often just because the focus of the class but their way that they can communicate using research and supporting their claims and things it is different and I feel like even my high achieving students, it's a little bit of a weakness there as compared to writing about fiction and poetry and things that we work on with the class.
SCC Area Teacher: 15:21 Even if they don't understand or even if they do struggle there is this internal motivation to try to figure it out or to at least come to me and ask questions and work with me, and talk to me about what to improve upon or they'll say things and recognize in their own writing almost this "I know that this does not sound right, I know that this is weak, what's wrong with this?".
SCC Area Teacher: 15:46 As far as the low achieving students there is not that internal motivation to really even push themselves until they absolutely have to. Maybe it's a grade motivator, maybe it's oh I'm going to fail this if I don't. They just don't have that internal drive to strengthen their writing. To them I feel like the viewpoint with them is I'm gonna do what I have to do to skate by, or I'm gonna do what I absolutely have to do, but I'm not gonna take the extra time or the extra steps to try to better. They're not concerned with bettering their writing in general. It's just let me just get through this assignment, they don't have the bigger picture vision.
Interviewer: 16:43 So with the high achieving students even though they may have done things that don't necessarily map to what they'll be expected to do in first year comp, they have the motivation to figure that out and can take some of the skills they have learned and transfer them over. Whereas the low achieving students you're saying as far as their preparedness for college level writing, what would you say about that?
SCC Area Teacher: 17:07 In my opinion I do not feel that the preparedness is there with the low achieving students. I'm trying to think of how to word this but I just don't feel like with some of the students I can push and push and push and talk to them about college and about the classes and what they should expect, but they don't

really take that information in and think you know I need to work on this and better myself and become college ready because they value that, I don't think the value for them is placed in becoming prepared.
Interviewer: 18:03 Okay, that makes sense I see what you're saying there. Sometimes if they ever do become able to perform in that setting it's gonna be because they have some other reason where they have to do it?
SCC Area Teacher: 18:17 Yes.
Interviewer: 18:19 That's really good and I think you covered both of those questions there. The next section then is kind of getting closer to the end since we've talked about differences between high school and college. Things that happen in high school that get us ready for college.
Interviewer: 18:35 As far as your awareness of conditions in college English composition, so what I mean by that if you remember from the survey I kind of listed them out. Conditions are things like writing assignments, types of readings, the learning conditions and how they're different from what you experienced as a high school teacher, working conditions for teachers, the pedagogical strategies, standards and objectives things like that, what would help you increase your awareness of those conditions as they occur in college English composition classrooms?
SCC Area Teacher: 19:13 I would love to see some kind of open line of communication. I'm not sure, you mentioned professional development and things and how ... I feel like that would be a really good starting point. To be able to have a spot where you have post-secondary educators and your secondary educators come together to be able to really talk some things out because even with the last few years, I'm not sure on your end, I just my end with the secondary education. It's changed quite a bit, and the expectations that we have to do, and what we're expected to cover.
SCC Area Teacher: 19:58 I know at least in my department at the high school we want to push the college readiness and them being prepared and to do and know what they are going to cover in those beginning composition classes. The only open line of communication that I know of that has taken place is between the college instructors and then the instructors at the high school level that are dual credit. I know that there is that open line of communication, because they have to make sure that they are on the same page and what's happening and what they're doing.
SCC Area Teacher: 20:38 When you have teachers like myself and others at my school where the dual credit opportunities are not there, when they do have meetings or they do meet about that curriculum we're not included.
Interviewer: 20:54 Okay.
SCC Area Teacher: 20:56 So I feel like we need a better understanding by being there and being present in those conversations and see what is going on, and what is happening with those things. I feel like that's a really good starting point to be able to then make those contacts of who you could really talk to about the curriculum or questions, and different strategies that they have tried that have worked or not worked, I just feel like that's a good starting point.
Interviewer: 21:31 Okay, that's very helpful actually. That seems to be what some other people have said too. I've seen that myself with some of my only interactions. Part of what inspired what I'm working on because the doctoral program that I'm in, it's really interesting it combines people who are highs school teachers and people who are college instructors in the same classes.
SCC Area Teacher: 21:56 Oh wow.
Interviewer: 21:56 So it's kind of cool, so we actually talk to each other, so it's kind of incidental interaction that you learn things from, and that's really cool. Similarly with the dual credit instructors at our department meetings at Shawnee college. Whoa there are a lot of differences and you guys are doing a totally different thing and we're trying to call it the same thing.
SCC Area Teacher: 22:17 Right, yeah, and we're in an odd spot as well where we do want to service our students in the location, and being in <city>, students that don't pursue four year university tracks when they do junior colleges a large percentage go to <community college A> and then the other percentage, it's almost kind of split, about half and half, half would do <community college A> and half would do <community college B>.
SCC Area Teacher: 22:54 Even both institutions, there's not been any kind of contacts that have been able to be made or meetings that we were able to go to, to try to get a feel for what our students are encountering. The best that I have received would be maybe some of my junior students, or even some of the senior ones that maybe are taking a night class and they run into English 111 and they talk to me about what they're doing. That's the only way I know what's happening or going on.
Interviewer: 23:36 That's interesting. Some of the trouble that you might be seeing just from my experience on this project so far might be on the fault of the college instructors because I've had a lot easier time getting high school teachers to engage with me on things and get information from and the college instructors kind of wall off.
SCC Area Teacher: 24:04 Yeah.

Interviewer: 24:04 So that's interesting, if we were allocating blame our direction is probably where a lot of it goes. Anyway that sums up all the questions that I have, if you are interested in seeing anything that comes out of this, any write ups or whatever. You can just me for it and I'll give it to you.
Interviewer: 24:31 If you see it and I've changed your gender or something like that, that's because it's part of the process of covering up your personal identifiable information. So if I call you he or something it's on purpose. That might be kind of weird if you're reading your own words and it's like , "He said this".
SCC Area Teacher: 24:51 Right.
Interviewer: 24:52 Anyway that's just a normal thing that we would do, but you can contact me any time with follow up questions if you need to clarify any answer you've given me, I can do that at any point.
Interviewer: 25:06 The main thing is you've expressed everything very well and this has been a super helpful bit of information you're giving me here. I really appreciate you doing this for me.
SCC Area Teacher: 25:16 I'm glad. [redacted]
Interviewer: 25:21 [redacted]
SCC Area Teacher: 25:23 [redacted]
Interviewer: 25:23 [redacted]
SCC Area Teacher: 25:41 [redacted]
Interviewer: 26:00 [redacted]
SCC Area Teacher: 26:11 [redacted]
Interviewer: 26:15 [redacted]
SCC Area Teacher: 26:27 [redacted]
Interviewer: 26:29 [redacted]
SCC Area Teacher: 26:36 [redacted]
Interviewer: 26:40 [redacted]
SCC Area Teacher: 26:50 No problem.
Interviewer: 26:50 All right, well have a good semester.
SCC Area Teacher: 26:51 Let me know if you need anything else.
Interviewer: 26:52 I will.
SCC Area Teacher: 26:52 Okay, you too.
Interviewer: 26:54 Thank you, bye bye.
SCC Area Teacher: 26:55 Bye bye.

Appendix H: Sample Plan Documents

Preliminary Needs Assessment – College

Twin Teachers

A Collaborative Effort Connecting High School and College English Teachers

Preliminary Needs Assessment – College

Participants:
Please answer the following questions frankly and honestly; they will be shared with other teachers as a basis for conversation during the course of your collaboration.

Part 1: Awareness
Describe the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

My students understand the expectations of college-level writing.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

My students are prepared to write at an appropriate level for first-year college composition.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am aware of the types of writing assignments assigned in high school English classes.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am aware of the types of reading assignments assigned in high school English classes.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am aware of the learning conditions of students taking high school English classes.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am aware of the working conditions for high school English teachers in my area.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am aware of the common pedagogical strategies used by high school English teachers.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am familiar with the standards and objectives that high school English teachers are required to meet.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I believe greater awareness of conditions in high school English (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives) would help me improve my teaching.
Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Twin Teachers

A Collaborative Effort Connecting High School and College English Teachers

Part 2: How and Why We Teach

These questions relate to the *community of practice* (Wenger) in which you work; in your case, this involves the various ways in which teachers engage with one another and with students to meet the educational goals valued by you, the students, your institution, or other stakeholders. Answer the following questions:

What is the most important aspect of the educational goals you set for your students? Does this differ from the educational goals set by your institution, and how?
[ ]

Describe the most frequently used practices (i.e. pedagogical strategies, workplace habits, repeated actions, routines) that you and the other teachers you work with use to achieve the educational goals described above:
[ ]

How did you learn those practices, and how would you communicate them to novice teachers if you believe they would provide a valuable addition to their practice?
[ ]

Part 3: How We Talk

These questions relate to the *discourse community* (Swales) in which you practice as an educator; that is, the characteristic ways in which teachers talk to one another as teachers. Answer the following questions:

List seven key terms that are frequently used to communicate professional information among high school teachers:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

Describe how information is distributed among high school teachers *within* the school in which you work.
[ ]

Describe how information is distributed among high school teachers *outside* your institution (i.e., within your discipline or profession).
[ ]

TEXTS REFERENCED:

SWALES, JOHN. "THE CONCEPT OF DISCOURSE COMMUNITY." *GENRE ANALYSIS: ENGLISH IN ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH SETTINGS*, CAMBRIDGE UP, 1990, PP. 21–32.

WENGER, ETIENNE. *COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE: LEARNING, MEANING, AND IDENTITY*. CAMBRIDGE UP, 1999.

Twin Teachers

A Collaborative Effort Connecting High School and College English Teachers

Preliminary Needs Assessment – High School

Participants:

Please answer the following questions frankly and honestly; they will be shared with other teachers as a basis for conversation during the course of your collaboration.

Part 1: Awareness

Describe the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

My students understand the expectations of college-level writing.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

My students are prepared to write at an appropriate level for first-year college composition.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am aware of the types of writing assignments assigned in college English composition classes.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am aware of the types of reading assignments assigned in college English composition classes.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am aware of the learning conditions of high school students taking college English composition classes.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am aware of the working conditions for college-level English instructors in my area.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am aware of the common pedagogical strategies used by college-level English instructors.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I am familiar with the standards and objectives that college-level English instructors are required to meet.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

I believe greater awareness of conditions in college English composition (types of writing assignments, types of reading assignments, learning conditions, working conditions for teachers, pedagogical strategies, high school standards/objectives) would help me improve my teaching.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Part 2: How We Teach

These questions relate to the *community of practice* (Wenger) in which you work; in your case, this involves the various ways in which teachers engage with one another and with students to meet the educational goals valued by you, the students, your institution, or other stakeholders. Answer the following questions:

What is the most important aspect of the educational goals you set for your students? Does this differ from the educational goals set by your institution, and how?
[ ]

Describe the most frequently used practices (i.e. pedagogical strategies, workplace habits, repeated actions, routines) that you and the other teachers you work with use to achieve the educational goals described above:
[ ]

How did you learn those practices, and how would you communicate them to novice teachers if you believe they would provide a valuable addition to their practice?
[ ]

Part 3: How We Talk

These questions relate to the *discourse community* (Swales) in which you practice as an educator; that is, the characteristic ways in which teachers talk to one another as teachers. Answer the following questions:

List seven key terms that are frequently used to communicate professional information among high school teachers:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

Describe how information is distributed among high school teachers *within* the school in which you work.
[ ]

Describe how information is distributed among high school teachers *outside* your institution (i.e., within your discipline or profession).
[ ]

TEXTS REFERENCED:

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WENGER, ETIENNE. *COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE: LEARNING, MEANING, AND IDENTITY*. CAMBRIDGE UP, 1999.

Twin Teachers

A Collaborative Effort Connecting High School and College English Teachers

Communities of Practice

In his 1999 book, learning theorist Etienne Wenger describes a socially-situated theory of learning based on "communities of practice", which involves people coming together in:

- A joint enterprise ("what we are here to do")
- Generating meaning and understanding through mutual engagement, and
- Producing physical or mental artifacts that provide a focus for the generation of meaning.

The workplace of high school teachers and college instructors represent different-yet-related communities of practice. Our joint enterprise differs, the way we engage with one another in pursuit of those goals differs, and the objects and metaphors we use to understand our work can also differ.

Before discussing the differences in your communities of practice with your partner, consider these questions:

1. . What is the goal of an educator in my field? It helps to consider what the main goals are, and add secondary goals if necessary.

2. . How do I interact with other educators in my school? In my discipline? What is the process through which we learn new practices?

3. . What kinds of artifacts do we generate through this process? Include physical objects (syllabi, lesson plans, write-ups) and mental objects (metaphors, analogies, commonly-held beliefs).

Wenger, Etienne. *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. Cambridge UP, 1999.

Twin Teachers
A Collaborative Effort Connecting High School and College English Teachers

Discourse Communities

The concept of a "discourse community" found broad use in the field of teaching writing. Contrasted with "speech community", which is better suited to a discussion of oral discourse and social factors like ethnicity and class, the idea of "discourse community" can be used to describe groups based on the goals they share in common. Linguist and University of Michigan professor emeritus John Swales describes six characteristics that are "necessary" and "sufficient" for the existence of a discourse community (Swales 24-7):

- An agreed "set of common public goals"
- "Mechanisms of intercommunication" among members
- The use (or "uptake") of information by participants; "participatory mechanisms to provide information and feedback"
- The development and use of genres to play upon the expectations of members
- A shared set of definitions (a "lexis") for specific terms
- A critical mass of experts with a mastery in the area of expertise

There are similarities in the discourse communities of high school teachers and college instructors, but there are also substantial differences. Take this opportunities to highlight some of those differences and consider why they exist.

Before discussing the differences in your discourse communities with your partner, consider these questions:

1. Revisit the question you answered in the first session on communities of practice, where you discussed "What is the goal of an educator in my field?" Are your goals visible in the communication you engage in with your colleagues? How?

2. . What genres are used in communication with other professionals in your field? Think broadly.

3. List some examples of specialized definitions or jargon used in your field. Discuss the words that are unfamiliar to your partner.

Swales, John. "The Concept of Discourse Community." *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*, Cambridge UP, 1990, pp. 21–32.

Twin Teachers

A Collaborative Effort Connecting High School and College English Teachers

College Level Writing: Intentionally Rhetorical

Among high school and college writing teachers, the relationship between those teachers and the writing goals they set for their students is uneven. High school teachers have to work harder to determine what "college-level writing" is, while college instructors enjoy the presumption that whatever they do is, in fact, college-level writing. Nonetheless, the question of the qualities of college level writing cannot be ignored. For instance, Common Core State Standards for writing in high school, as in all content areas, aims for "college and career readiness" (Common Core State Standards Initiative), the implication being that adequate preparation for college is adequate preparation for the workplace, and vice versa.

As a result, high school English teachers may be frustrated by a lack of first-hand experience of the expectations for which they are preparing their students, and college composition instructors may be led to complacency by their position as the gatekeeper to college-level writing: is college-level work simply whatever the college instructor says it is? This session, then, will provide an opportunity for both sides to reflect on the nature of college-level writing through personal experience and conversation, so the high school teacher knows what to aim for and the college instructor has a goal worth fulfilling. Recall that in a community of practice (Wenger), the qualities include a joint enterprise built around "what they are there to do" (74). For writing teachers in high school and college, "do" includes teaching students how to write at a "college-worthy" level, and it is valuable to explore what that means both in the literature and as an exercise for collaborating teachers.

Unfortunately, the diverse contexts in which high school and college educators work creates divergent emphases, so it appears to the student that there is no meaningful response to the question of college-level writing attributes. For instance, a particular definition of college-level writing may depend on:

- Regional and socioeconomic cultural expectations
- Mission of the institution in which the skill is taught
- Instructor ideology
- Vocational perspective (student, teacher, administrator, employer, etc.)
- Writing purpose

Writing is astoundingly versatile and can function in any communicative situation with a writer and a reader. Clearly, the definition cannot rest upon

what college-level writing can do. Rather, consider what it must do to be considered "college level". What is the fundamental quality most college-level writing shares, assuming a multiplicity of contexts, cultures, purposes, missions, and perspectives?

The essential quality, then, is the intentionally rhetorical nature of a text: it reflects an ability on the part of the author to effectively connect to an audience, to generate understanding of and sympathy toward a perspective, and to plausibly speak as a participant in a conversation rather than as a respondent to a prompt.

This understanding is reflected in the literature on the question, from outcomes statements to scholarly examinations of the question of college-level writing. For example, the WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition, promulgated by the Council of Writing Program Administrators and used as a basis for college writing program expectations nationwide, envisions an intentionally rhetorical text as a fulfillment of its mission. Of the four major aspects described in the statement, two of them ("Rhetorical Knowledge" and "Conventions") are explicitly tied to the rhetorical qualities of a text, and the other two aspects ("Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing" and "Processes") are not particularly characteristic of college-level writing alone.

Other scholar-educators who have explored the question of college-level writing differ widely in their context-specific reconnaissance of the issue, but tend to agree on the importance of deliberately applied rhetorical art. In 1989, Kathleen Black of the University of Northwestern (Saint Paul) studied the impact of audience awareness on persuasiveness in college student papers, and found that the group of writers that was cued with information about their readers before writing composed more persuasive papers. When two researchers from San Diego State University – Barbara Moss and Suzanne Bordelon – set out to develop a senior-year class aimed at increasing college readiness in an ethnically diverse school in a large southwestern border city, they purposefully designed a rhetoric and writing course, since such a course would better prepare students for actual college-level writing. Finally, in their account of the Summer Writing Program at Carleton College in southwest Minnesota, Deborah Appleman and Douglas Green explored the "boundary" between high school and college writing; while they made no firm conclusions, they agreed that the qualities of good college writing include "control", which reflects the writer's ability to use writing as a communicative tool and not solely as a private forum for self-expression, and "revision", which is the modification of a text to meet the expectations

and needs of readers, requiring an ability to understand those expectations and needs (194-6).

The essays in the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) collections What Is "College-Level" Writing (2006) and What is "College-Level" Writing? Volume 2: Assignments, Readings, and Student Writing Samples (2010) serve as one record of this ongoing discussion, and those scholars – again, in diverse contexts – agree that college-level writing is intentionally rhetorical, whatever else it may also be. The editors (Patrick Sullivan, Howard Tinberg, and, in the second volume, Sheridan Blau) build their collection around perspectives: high school teachers, college professors, students, and administrators. From the high school, Jeanette Jordan et al. deliberate briefly on the disciplinary shroud that keeps they and their colleagues from knowing what colleges expect of their students, but they are aware that college-level writing must anticipate "different writing tasks and audiences" (39). Merrill Davies notes that increasing emphasis has been placed on audience and voice in recent years, and college professors focus more on audience as a part of their evaluative mix (34). Additionally, while Milka Mustenikova Mosley associates college-level writing with exhibition of "ideas" and "individuality" (59), it could be argued that individuality is the additional ingredient needed to catch and retain the interest of the audience – a college-level writer should leave the reader with impression that they have not read a mere exercise in writing skill. Among college professors, unsurprisingly, the rhetorical aspect of the definition gains clarity. Lynn Bloom, author and English professor at the University of Connecticut, approaches the question with an extensive definition of "good enough" writing; that is, the sort of writing that would earn a "B" in a typical first-year composition course. To Bloom, however, excellent college-level writers participate in a conversation, moving beyond simply reporting upon someone else's conversation. Effective participation requires a rhetorical stance and sensitivity to how one is perceived. Muriel Harris, professor emerita from Purdue University, provides a perspective from the writing center, where she sees assignments from throughout the university, not composition courses alone. To her, college-level writing is reader-centric, demonstrating the "writer's ability to write effectively to his or her particular audience" (123), and she refers to the distinction made by Linda Flower (in College English, 1979) between writer-based prose and reader-based prose, the latter being the more advanced approach. Finally, the administrators in the collection provide some unique insights regarding the attributes of college-level writing. James Gentile, a community college English department chair, uses Bloom's taxonomy

as a lens through which to understand college-level writing, motivating the student to "move beyond the self" and "think in the context of others" (325). He also emphasizes academic literacy, a concept that assumes a community or audience. Chris Kearns, the Assistant Dean of Student Services at the University of Minnesota, underscores the recursive character of college writing. He critiques the three common approaches to writing that students bring with them from the high school: writing as a performance for the instructor, writing as an expression of individuality and sincerity over rhetorical effectiveness, and writing as a means to an end (346-8). To Kearns, all of these approaches are inadequate. What they are missing is a "dialogic consciousness" demanding awareness of "at least two consciousnesses: that of the writer and that of the implied reader" (348-9). College writing begins with a consciousness of the presence of others. All three of these perspectives – high school teacher, college professor, and college administrator – appear to come together at the intentionally rhetorical nature of college-level writing, to various degrees.

For writing teachers at both levels who are working together to dismantle cultural barriers and align objectives, understanding the salient qualities of the student writing toward which you are working is indispensable. While together you may settle on a definition of college-level writing that differs in nuance, it is important to have a theoretical base upon which you can situate yourselves as teachers.

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Twin Teachers

A Collaborative Effort Connecting High School and College English Teachers

Commitment Document
Terms & Expectations for Participants

The purpose of this document is to outline the expectations for participants in the Twin Teachers program. While participation is voluntary, there is value in establishing agreement among participants in advance. The intent is that this document will help facilitate further connections and help build an environment of trust and shared expectations. Please note that, while this document is an agreement, nothing prevents you from voluntarily withdrawing your participation at any time. Your commitments regarding privacy and ownership of materials will remain even if you stop participating in the program.

By signing this document, I commit to:

- Prioritize my involvement in discussions and reflections
- Treat my partner and other program participants with respect and tolerance
- Assume professional equality with other participants, recognizing their expertise in areas of practice that may differ from my own
- Make a good-faith effort to ensure that our collaboration time contributes to my professional development as a teacher
- Protect my students' privacy by removing names and personally identifying information from shared materials
- Protect the privacy of other participants' students by holding personally identifying information revealed in discussions in full confidence
- Protect the privacy of other participants by holding personally identifying information revealed in discussions in full confidence
- Share equal ownership and authorship with my partner for any publishable materials resulting from our collaboration

Agreed on this date: ___/___/_____

Sign Name: _____

Print Name: _____

Appendix I: Research Approval Documents

Murray State University Institutional Review Board

MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY
Institutional Review Board
328 Wells Hall
Murray, KY 42071-3318
270-809-2916• msu.irb@murraystate.edu

As amended:
Amendment 1 - Approved 11/02/2018
Amendment 2 - Approved 11/28/2018
Amendment 3 - Approved 01/24/2019

TO: Sara Cooper, English and Philosophy

FROM: Jonathan Baskin, IRB Coordinator JB

DATE: 10/16/2018

RE: Human Subjects Protocol I.D. – IRB # 19-039

The IRB has completed its review of your student's Level 1 protocol entitled *Twin Teachers: Advancing Understanding among Secondary and Post-Secondary Composition Instructors through Individual Connections*. After review and consideration, the IRB has determined that the research, as described in the protocol form, will be conducted in compliance with Murray State University guidelines for the protection of human participants.

The forms and materials that have been approved for use in this research study are attached to the email containing this letter. These are the forms and materials that must be presented to the subjects. Use of any process or forms other than those approved by the IRB will be considered misconduct in research as stated in the MSU IRB Procedures and Guidelines section 20.3.

Your stated data collection period is from 10/16/2018 to 10/15/2019.

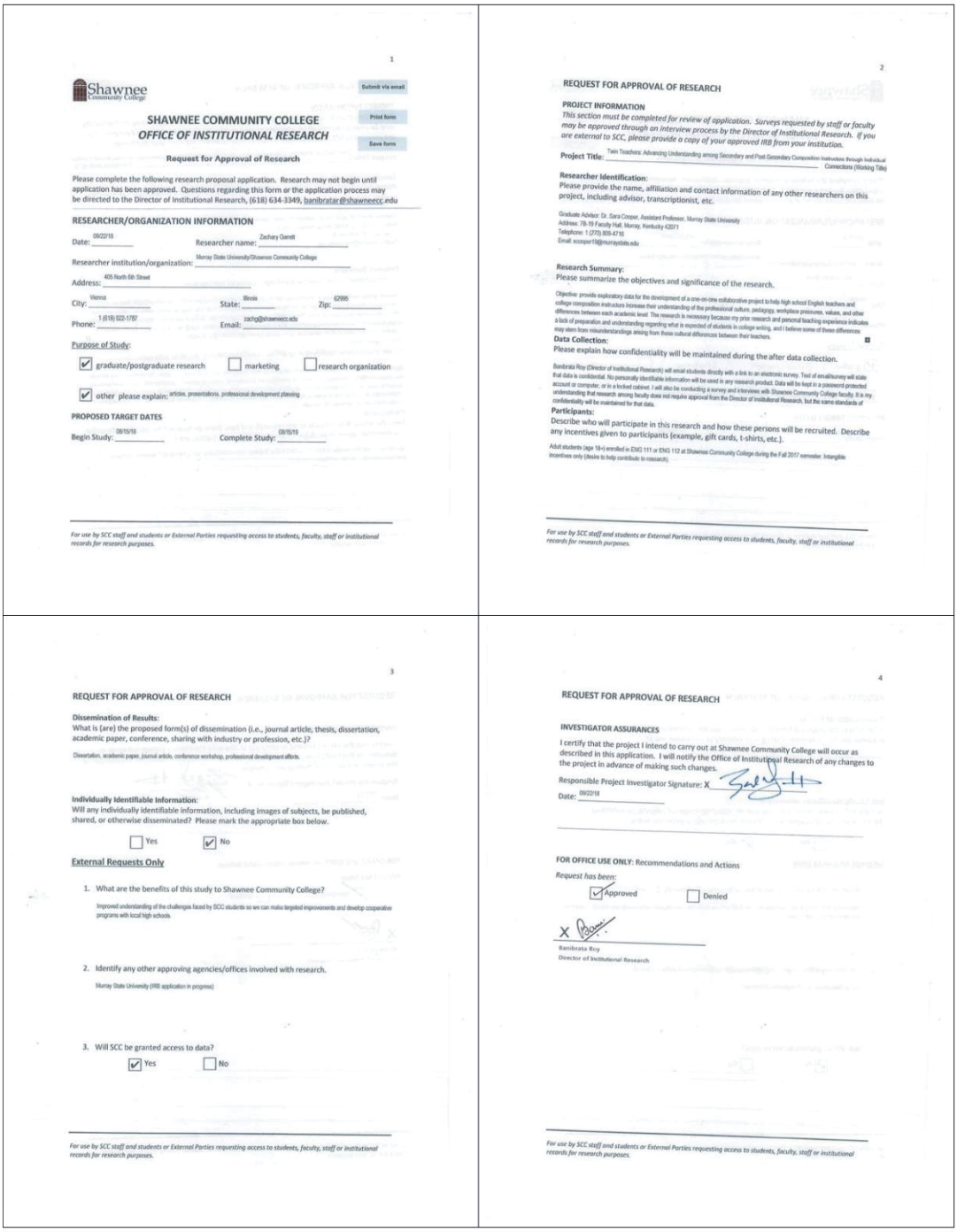
If data collection extends beyond this period, please submit an Amendment to an Approved Protocol form detailing the new data collection period and the reason for the change.

This Level 1 approval is valid until 10/15/2019.

If data collection and analysis extends beyond this date, the research project must be reviewed as a continuation project by the IRB prior to the end of the approval period, 10/15/2019. You must reapply for IRB approval by submitting a Project Update and Closure form (available at murraystate.edu/irb). You must allow ample time for IRB processing and decision prior to your expiration date, or your research must stop until such time that IRB approval is received. If the research project is completed by the end of the approval period, then a Project Update and Closure form must be submitted for IRB review so that your protocol may be closed. It is your responsibility to submit the appropriate paperwork in a timely manner.

The protocol is approved. You may begin data collection now.

Shawnee Community College Office of Institutional Research



1

Shawnee Community College

Submit via email

Print form

Save form

SHAWNEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Request for Approval of Research

Please complete the following research proposal application. Research may not begin until application has been approved. Questions regarding this form or the application process may be directed to the Director of Institutional Research, (618) 634-3349, banibratar@shawneecc.edu

RESEARCHER/ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Date: 09/22/18 Researcher name: Zachary Garrett

Researcher institution/organization: Murray State University/Shawnee Community College

Address: 405 North 6th Street

City: Vienna State: Illinois Zip: 62995

Phone: 1 (618) 622-1757 Email: zachg@shawneecc.edu

Purpose of Study:

☑ graduate/postgraduate research ☐ marketing ☐ research organization

☑ other please explain: articles, presentations, professional development planning

PROPOSED TARGET DATES

Begin Study: 09/15/18 Complete Study: 09/15/19

For use by SCC staff and students or External Parties requesting access to students, faculty, staff or institutional records for research purposes.

2

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH

PROJECT INFORMATION

This section must be completed for review of application. Surveys requested by staff or faculty may be approved through an interview process by the Director of Institutional Research. If you are external to SCC, please provide a copy of your approved IRB from your institution.

Project Title: Twin Teachers: Advancing Understanding among Secondary and Post-Secondary Composition Instructors through Individual Connections (Working Title)

Researcher Identification:
Please provide the name, affiliation and contact information of any other researchers on this project, including advisor, transcriptionist, etc.

Graduate Advisor: Dr. Sara Cooper, Assistant Professor, Murray State University
Address: 7B-19 Faculty Hall, Murray, Kentucky 42071
Telephone: 1 (270) 809-4718
Email: scooper19@murraystate.edu

Research Summary:
Please summarize the objectives and significance of the research.

Objective: provide exploratory data for the development of a one-on-one collaborative project to help high school English teachers and college composition instructors increase their understanding of the professional culture, pedagogy, workplace pressures, values, and other differences between each academic level. The research is necessary because my prior research and personal teaching experience indicates a lack of preparation and understanding regarding what is expected of students in college writing, and I believe some of these differences may stem from misunderstandings arising from these cultural differences between their teachers.

Data Collection:
Please explain how confidentiality will be maintained during the after data collection.

Banibrata Roy (Director of Institutional Research) will email students directly with a link to an electronic survey. Text of email/survey will state that data is confidential. No personally identifiable information will be used in any research product. Data will be kept in a password-protected account or computer, or in a locked cabinet. I will also be conducting a survey and interviews with Shawnee Community College faculty. It is my understanding that research among faculty does not require approval from the Director of Institutional Research, but the same standards of confidentiality will be maintained for that data.

Participants:
Describe who will participate in this research and how these persons will be recruited. Describe any incentives given to participants (example, gift cards, t-shirts, etc.).

Adult students (age 18+) enrolled in ENG 111 or ENG 112 at Shawnee Community College during the Fall 2017 semester. Intangible incentives only (desire to help contribute to research).

For use by SCC staff and students or External Parties requesting access to students, faculty, staff or institutional records for research purposes.

3

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH

Dissemination of Results:
What is (are) the proposed form(s) of dissemination (i.e., journal article, thesis, dissertation, academic paper, conference, sharing with industry or profession, etc.)?

Dissertation, academic paper, journal article, conference workshop, professional development efforts.

Individually Identifiable Information:
Will any individually identifiable information, including images of subjects, be published, shared, or otherwise disseminated? Please mark the appropriate box below.

☐ Yes ☑ No

External Requests Only

1. What are the benefits of this study to Shawnee Community College?

   Improved understanding of the challenges faced by SCC students so we can make targeted improvements and develop cooperative programs with local high schools.

2. Identify any other approving agencies/offices involved with research.

   Murray State University (IRB application in progress)

3. Will SCC be granted access to data?

   ☑ Yes ☐ No

For use by SCC staff and students or External Parties requesting access to students, faculty, staff or institutional records for research purposes.

4

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH

INVESTIGATOR ASSURANCES

I certify that the project I intend to carry out at Shawnee Community College will occur as described in this application. I will notify the Office of Institutional Research of any changes to the project in advance of making such changes.

Responsible Project Investigator Signature: X

Date: 09/22/18

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: Recommendations and Actions

Request has been:

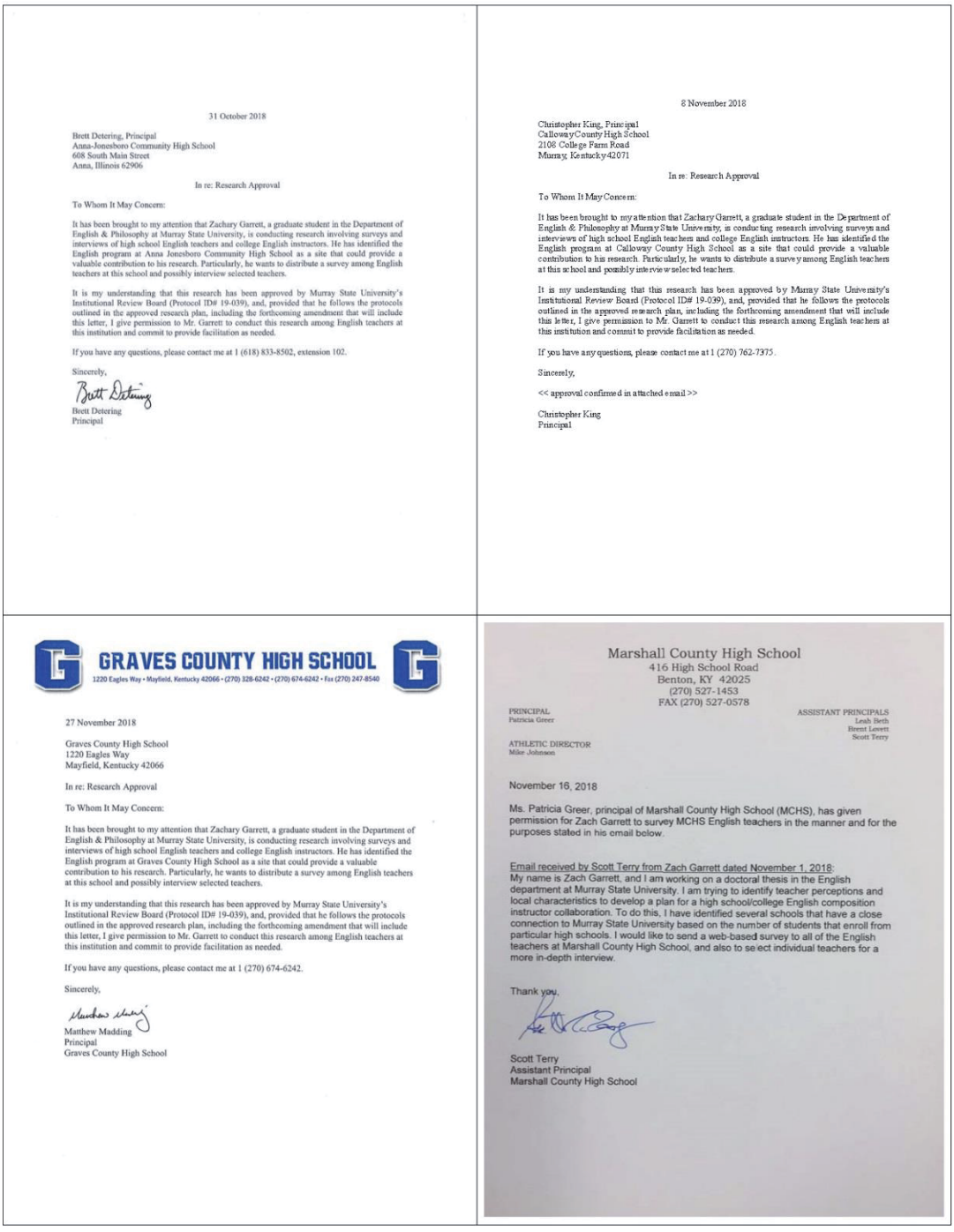
☑ Approved ☐ Denied

X

Banibrata Roy
Director of Institutional Research

For use by SCC staff and students or External Parties requesting access to students, faculty, staff or institutional records for research purposes.

High School Administrator Authorization Letters



31 October 2018

Brett Detering, Principal
Anna-Jonesboro Community High School
608 South Main Street
Anna, Illinois 62906

In re: Research Approval

To Whom It May Concern:

It has been brought to my attention that Zachary Garrett, a graduate student in the Department of English & Philosophy at Murray State University, is conducting research involving surveys and interviews of high school English teachers and college English instructors. He has identified the English program at Anna Jonesboro Community High School as a site that could provide a valuable contribution to his research. Particularly, he wants to distribute a survey among English teachers at this school and possibly interview selected teachers.

It is my understanding that this research has been approved by Murray State University's Institutional Review Board (Protocol ID# 19-039), and, provided that he follows the protocols outlined in the approved research plan, including the forthcoming amendment that will include this letter, I give permission to Mr. Garrett to conduct this research among English teachers at this institution and commit to provide facilitation as needed.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 1 (618) 833-8502, extension 102.

Sincerely,

Brett Detering
Principal

8 November 2018

Christopher King, Principal
Calloway County High School
2108 College Farm Road
Murray, Kentucky 42071

In re: Research Approval

To Whom It May Concern:

It has been brought to my attention that Zachary Garrett, a graduate student in the Department of English & Philosophy at Murray State University, is conducting research involving surveys and interviews of high school English teachers and college English instructors. He has identified the English program at Calloway County High School as a site that could provide a valuable contribution to his research. Particularly, he wants to distribute a survey among English teachers at this school and possibly interview selected teachers.

It is my understanding that this research has been approved by Murray State University's Institutional Review Board (Protocol ID# 19-039), and, provided that he follows the protocols outlined in the approved research plan, including the forthcoming amendment that will include this letter, I give permission to Mr. Garrett to conduct this research among English teachers at this institution and commit to provide facilitation as needed.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 1 (270) 762-7375.

Sincerely,

<< approval confirmed in attached email >>

Christopher King
Principal

GRAVES COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL
1220 Eagles Way • Mayfield, Kentucky 42066 • (270) 328-6242 • (270) 674-6242 • Fax (270) 247-8540

27 November 2018

Graves County High School
1220 Eagles Way
Mayfield, Kentucky 42066

In re: Research Approval

To Whom It May Concern:

It has been brought to my attention that Zachary Garrett, a graduate student in the Department of English & Philosophy at Murray State University, is conducting research involving surveys and interviews of high school English teachers and college English instructors. He has identified the English program at Graves County High School as a site that could provide a valuable contribution to his research. Particularly, he wants to distribute a survey among English teachers at this school and possibly interview selected teachers.

It is my understanding that this research has been approved by Murray State University's Institutional Review Board (Protocol ID# 19-039), and, provided that he follows the protocols outlined in the approved research plan, including the forthcoming amendment that will include this letter, I give permission to Mr. Garrett to conduct this research among English teachers at this institution and commit to provide facilitation as needed.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 1 (270) 674-6242.

Sincerely,

Matthew Madding
Principal
Graves County High School

Marshall County High School
416 High School Road
Benton, KY 42025
(270) 527-1453
FAX (270) 527-0578

PRINCIPAL
Patricia Greer

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
Leah Beth
Brent Lovett
Scott Terry

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR
Mike Johnson

November 16, 2018

Ms. Patricia Greer, principal of Marshall County High School (MCHS), has given permission for Zach Garrett to survey MCHS English teachers in the manner and for the purposes stated in his email below.

Email received by Scott Terry from Zach Garrett dated November 1, 2018:
My name is Zach Garrett, and I am working on a doctoral thesis in the English department at Murray State University. I am trying to identify teacher perceptions and local characteristics to develop a plan for a high school/college English composition instructor collaboration. To do this, I have identified several schools that have a close connection to Murray State University based on the number of students that enroll from particular high schools. I would like to send a web-based survey to all of the English teachers at Marshall County High School, and also to select individual teachers for a more in-depth interview.

Thank you.

Scott Terry
Assistant Principal
Marshall County High School

1 November 2018

Parker Windhorst, Principal
Massac County High School
2841 Old Marion Road
Metropolis, Illinois 62960

In re: Research Approval

To Whom It May Concern:

It has been brought to my attention that Zachary Garrett, a graduate student in the Department of English & Philosophy at Murray State University, is conducting research involving surveys and interviews of high school English teachers and college English instructors. He has identified the English program at Massac County High School as a site that could provide a valuable contribution to his research. Particularly, he wants to distribute a survey among English teachers at this school and possibly interview selected teachers.

It is my understanding that this research has been approved by Murray State University's Institutional Review Board (Protocol ID# 19-039), and, provided that he follows the protocols outlined in the approved research plan, including the forthcoming amendment that will include this letter, I give permission to Mr. Garrett to conduct this research among English teachers at this institution and commit to provide facilitation as needed.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 1 (618) 524-3440.

Sincerely,

Parker Windhorst
Principal

14 November 2018

Joshua W. Stafford, Superintendent
Vienna High School
601 North 1st Street
Vienna, Illinois 62995

In re: Research Approval

To Whom It May Concern:

It has been brought to my attention that Zachary Garrett, a graduate student in the Department of English & Philosophy at Murray State University, is conducting research involving surveys and interviews of high school English teachers and college English instructors. He has identified the English program at Vienna High School as a site that could provide a valuable contribution to his research. Particularly, he wants to distribute a survey among English teachers at this school and possibly interview selected teachers.

It is my understanding that this research has been approved by Murray State University's Institutional Review Board (Protocol ID# 19-039), and, provided that he follows the protocols outlined in the approved research plan, including the forthcoming amendment that will include this letter, I give permission to Mr. Garrett to conduct this research among English teachers at this institution and commit to provide facilitation as needed.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 1 (618) 658-4461.

Sincerely,

Joshua W. Stafford
Superintendent

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